THE
AMERICAN WEST

COVER

FROM WHERE I STOOD *there was no visible evidence that the earth was inhabited. Like some astronomer peering through a telescope at the planet Mars, I could only say, "It might be." It was thus the world must have looked at the end of the fifth day, and I found myself wondering whether the text of Genesis might not possibly be garbled; whether, perchance, it was really after the fifth, not after the sixth day, that God looked at His work and saw that it was good. Would not I in His place, have stopped right there? Would I have risked the addition of a disturbing element? Was the world ever again as obviously good?*

— from *Baja California and the Geography of Hope*, text by Joseph Wood Krutch, photographs by Eliot Porter (Sierra Club, 1967).

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The Connecticut, flagship of the Great White Fleet. Westerners got their first glimpse of the United States as an intercontinental power in April and May of 1908, when the assembled naval might of the nation paraded the coast, from San Diego to Puget Sound, at the end of the first leg of a forty-six-thousand-mile circumnavigation that "showed the flag" as it had never been shown before.

BELATED FRONTIER

by Thomas M. Griffiths

THROUGHOUT HISTORY the wave of the farming frontier has never been able to move very far for very long before it has washed up against some geographic barrier that has either stopped it cold, diverted it, or turned it back upon itself. In the mountainous West, altitude and its attendant severity of climate have impeded the expansion of agriculture. In the High Plains and the Southwest aridity represents a similar climatic barrier; low temperatures and short growing seasons hamper farming in the northern High Plains. Sizable islands of unused or barely used land dot the map of the West, a continuing affront to the sensibilities of modern "pioneers," who would like the land to be used for *something*. Where impatience to own and develop land oversteps the logical bounds of technological possibility we experience the tragedy of a dust bowl.

More recently, the agricultural technician has been able to keep somewhat abreast of this pioneering drive, and a systematic advance into previously unused lands has occurred. The Peace River country of northwestern Canada is a particularly intriguing case study of this new pioneering process, for it is largely a phenomenon of the twentieth century. This does not imply that the Peace River country has lain completely hidden in the wilderness like an undiscovered Shangri-La; quite the contrary, for its "history" began early in October of 1792 when a tough young pathfinder named Alexander Mackenzie launched out from the North-West Company trading post at Fort Chipewyan, on Lake Athabasca in the northeast corner of what is now the province of Alberta.

For twenty days Mackenzie and the Scots and French Canadian *voyageurs* with him traveled up the Peace River, racing the seasonal onset of ice. Near the mouth of Smoky River the expedition established camp at what is called Fork Fort and settled down to spend the winter in the heart of the Peace River country. On the evening of May 9 the following spring (1793) this restless, twenty-nine-year-old scout and his party left Fork Fort and paddled up the river to the west.

Two and a half months later, having climbed to the headwaters of the Peace, thence crossing the Rockies and the Coast Range mountains, the Mackenzie party descended to a point on Burke Channel near modern Bella Coola. They had covered millions of acres and the northern portions of two provinces. Mackenzie terminated this first crossing of the continent north of Mexico by painting on a smooth rock, with a concoction of vermilion and hot grease, this terse message: ALEXANDER MACKENZIE FROM CANADA BY LAND THE 22ND OF JULY, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-THREE. Mackenzie's trek opened the fur-trading frontier of Peace River country. Ten years later Lewis and Clark left St. Louis for the upper Missouri and the mouth of the Columbia.

Any historian familiar with the march of empire across the American West should now be able to predict the succession of frontiers due to sweep across the Peace River landscape. That he might, in this instance, be wrong is not to his discredit, for destiny and environment have operated in another fashion here, although superficially the ingredients seem to be the same that have produced an orderly succession of fur-trade, cattle grazing, mining, and farming in the development of other frontier lands. Peace River country, however, refuses to run true to type; it has made the transition from fur-trading frontier to farming frontier in one dizzying leap early in the present century.

How did this happen? More to the point, *why* did it happen?

In order for a hinterland to be drawn into the mainstream of history, what it can or does produce must be wanted or needed. Moreover, these needed commodities or services must then be transported to the markets that need them, and all of this at a profit. The beaver pelts of the Peace River country were deep and rich, and returned a high value per unit of weight. They were wanted, easily transported, and quite profitable. The habitat was suitable, the market supportive; and so it

Part of the old settlement of Shaftesbury on the north bank of the Peace River
It was here that some of the earliest farms of the Peace River frontier were established

was the fur-trade that dominated Peace River country for many years — a greater number of years than in almost any other part of North America.

James MacGregor, chronicler of the area, lists forty-one separate fur-trading posts established in the Peace River country from about 1788 until as late as 1874. The first of these posts was built by the North-West Company near present-day Fort Vermilion, in north central Alberta. The last Hudson's Bay Company posts, now nearly one hundred years old, are still operated at Fort St. John, British Columbia; Hudson Hope, British Columbia; and Fort Vermilion, Alberta. Amal-

Clearing lands: stands of trees are left for windbreaks; the uprooted brush is dried for a season, burned, and the ashes raked over the fields.

gamation of the North-West Company with Hudson's Bay Company took place in 1821, creating a single trading instrumentality with great staying power.

In the summer of 1828, Sir George Simpson, energetic new governor of the combine, made an inspection trip as far west as Hudson Hope. It was a remarkable journey in several respects. Sir George was checking the posts between York Factory on Hudson Bay and the upper Peace River; his journal also hints at grand strategy and geopolitics. It took him just fifty-three days from Hudson Bay to Hudson Hope, following a route up the Nelson River, across Lake Winnipeg, up the Saskatchewan River, north over Methy Portage to Lake Athabasca, and thence up the Peace. The distance, including convolutions, was about two thousand miles. With time out to inspect posts, the average traveling day must have covered between forty and fifty miles, with about as much distance lying upstream as down. Some days went as high as one hundred miles — a record bearing solid tribute to the hardihood of the *voyageurs* who manned those bright vermilion paddles and poles of Sir George's canoe, which Malcolm McLeod described as ". . . the most beautiful thing of the kind I ever saw; . . . the bow, a magnificent curve of bark gaudily but tastefully painted, that would have made a Roman rostrum of old hide its diminished head . . ."

With the demise of the beaver trade late in the 1800's the fur-trading posts did not languish; they simply began trading in other furs and other commodities. An effective and profitable commercial link was already established between this isolated hinterland and the eastern heartland of Canada by birch-bark canoes and York boats, operating over a tenuous network of waterways that skirted around the north edge of the prairie provinces. So long as the products brought out and the trade goods taken in had a high value-weight ratio, the trade could and did continue.

The Peace River country never felt the impact of a mining frontier. No high value gold or silver strikes were made in the region, although a few gold hunters straggled through in the 1870's — and occasional "Klondikers" came through from the south in the 1900's strewing gear and bones all the way from Edmonton to Hudson Hope. Many of these wanderers wintered at Flying Shot Lake, where they ate their horses or died of scurvy or starvation. But the best routes to or from the gold strikes did not go through Peace River country.

The Peace never knew a cattle frontier either, for although there were open parks and prairies full of fodder within the region, severe winters and a province-wide cordon of thick bush made it impossible to use the area for commercial cattle grazing. There was no practical way to get cattle to market — no possibility of trail herding — no railway. From the 1790's to 1900, the Peace, as its settlers call this country, lay in an isolated backwater in northwest Canada, its fur resources tapped by "the Company," its meager settlements dominated by a few trading posts and missionary establishments, its agriculture conspicuous only for excellent kitchen gardens and potato patches. Hints of the coming farm frontier flickered into view but occasionally.

W. D. Albright, writing of this era, noted, "In 1840 three kegs of butter were shipped from Dunvegan to Chipewyan. . . . A flour mill, powered by a windmill, was erected in 1895 near Peace River. . . . In 1885 a farm instructor was sent to Fort Vermilion. His wife and

eight children arrived the next year."

In *The Land of Twelve-Foot Davis,* James G. MacGregor mentions that in 1893 the Reverend J. G. Brick sent wheat from Shaftesbury settlement near Peace River crossing to the Chicago World's Fair and won a prize. MacGregor adds that "this sample of wheat was possibly the only grain at the show which had traveled part of the way to Chicago by dogteam."

While the Peace slumbered quietly in the northwest, the southern regions of Saskatchewan and Alberta stirred and rustled as an ever growing number of acres of wheat ripened and rippled across the prairies as far north as Edmonton, where this ocean of grain stopped as if a line had been drawn, and indeed it had — a climatic line called an isotherm.

An isotherm is a line drawn on a map; it passes through points that have equal temperatures. An isohyet is a similar line that passes through points that have equal average rainfall. In the Canadian prairie, the location of isotherms is very important since the temperature regime and length of growing season control hardy grain culture. Isohyets are less important. Isaiah Bowman remarked in *The Pioneer Fringe,* "The Canadian pioneer of the north country may not know what an 'isotherm' is, but he has a genius for following it." With the westward extension of the first transcontinental railroad, beginning in 1872, Canadian pioneers began to pursue isotherms and isohyets into the Far West prairie provinces.

The railroad provided access from the Canadian West to the urban markets in the East and in Europe. It was said that when George Stevenson invented the steam engine that could run on wheels, he also built Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon, and a hundred other prairie centers in west Canada.

Eventually the massive advance of wheat culture began to reach its climatic limits. At the south it extended almost unbroken across Manitoba and Saskatchewan to the foothills of the Rockies in Alberta. In the north and northwest it climbed to the approximate limit of the 60° July isotherm, which presents an environmental barrier to wheat and which slants from west-northwest to east-southeast like a fence across the center of these three provinces. If one places a drafting compass on the map of Alberta, centers one leg on Edmonton and swings an arc of thirty to forty miles radius to the west, northwest, and north, he encompasses the outer fringe of commercial agriculture in this area. North of this climatic fence lay a land of bush and muskeg that was glaciated, water-logged, scant-soiled, with far too short a growing season for wheat.

On isolated cleared patches, an outer fringe of mixed farming pushed a few miles beyond the limits of wheat, and here authentic pioneers grubbed out an existence with subsistence crops, chopped wood all summer to carry through the cold months, and earned hard-to-get cash by running trap lines during the winter. None of them was so foolish as to cherish a delusion that the slow-moving wheat frontier would ever catch up with them. It hasn't to this day — instead it has leap-frogged beyond.

Ironically, two hundred miles to the northwest — beyond a belt of uninhabited bush — almost seventy-five million acres of prime agricultural land lay awaiting the second and third decades of this century for development. The pioneer farmer pursuing isotherms had every right to expect they would follow the laws of nature; therefore it was reasoned, if the climatic limit of grain culture was met just northwest of Edmonton, it would be wasted effort to search for farmland farther north or up the slope of the Rockies. Yet Peace River country lies here, far above the arc of wheat, on the arctic slope

of the North American continent. The climate of Peace River country, coupled with its gray-wooded and degraded black soils, offer much greater agricultural potential than any of the lands surrounding it. It is a geographical anomaly, this land—seventy-five million acres of prairie wheat land planted in the midst of bush, against the Rockies and two hundred miles beyond the nearest clearing.

The great river that lends its name to the region heads in the west between ranges of the Rocky Mountain system. It breaks out of the eastern ridge in a wild gorge that rears west of Hudson Hope, then sweeps eastward across the piedmont and the high plains, swings north, and finally arches eastward again to join that maze of rivers, channels, and lakes feeding the upper Mackenzie River system. Some twenty-five hundred miles from their source, the waters of Peace River mingle with those of the Athabasca, the Slave, and eventually the Mackenzie, to discharge at last among the ice floes of the Arctic Ocean. This is one of our continent's great river systems, fully as impressive as the Missouri-Mississippi; but its majestic sweep is wasted in outlandish latitudes.

The Peace River country extends roughly from the 55th to the 60th parallel of north latitude and from the 114th to the 122nd meridian of west longitude. The major portion of the area lies in Alberta, although the region extends some two degrees into British Columbia. From the Rockies the area extends eastward as a long, flat apron; a few low hills mark the interstream divides. Into this apron the Peace and its tributaries have entrenched themselves, lying in some places as much as nine hundred feet below the upland surface. Burned-over grassland and thick bush with wide expanses of open prairie characterize the southern half of the region. A prominent town in the southern Peace is Grand Prairie, its name aptly descriptive. To the west the boreal forest and grasslands meet the subalpine forests of the Rocky Mountain system; while the northern half of the region is covered with dense forest of scrubby conifers, aspen, birch, and poplar that the Canadians call "bush." The land slopes northward gently until the boreal forest gradually degrades into *taiga*, a vast stunted forest that reaches on to the northern timberline just south of the Arctic Ocean.

Beaverlodge, Alberta, in the southwestern part of the Peace, has an average annual temperature of 26° F, moderate for a station at 55° north latitude. Average annual precipitation is just over 17 inches and is dis-

Peace River landscape.

Beaver Lodge, west of Grand Prairie. The ubiquitous wooden grain elevators testify to the thriving wheat culture of this part of the Peace River country.

tributed fairly evenly throughout the year, with a maximum in June of 2 to 2¼ inches — ideal for commercial grain culture. Fort Vermilion, near the northern limit of the district, lies two hundred miles north of Beaverlodge. Here, the average annual temperature is about 17° F., and total precipitation is just under 13 inches.

Although the Peace River district lies in the "rain shadow" of the Rockies, there is an island of maximum rainfall at the southern edge, east of Grand Prairie. From there, annual rainfall decreases westward toward the mountains and northward toward the Arctic. The decrease in rainfall to the north is partly balanced by a decline in the evaporation rate, however.

Another factor of major importance is the annual frost-free period. A sixty-day frost-free period brackets the district at the north and the south, while a climatic tongue of more than eighty frost-free days extends through the center of the district.

By 1910 commercial grain culture had pushed through southern Alberta beyond Edmonton. There it faltered against the 60° July isotherm. The fringe land drained poorly and the bush — which was everywhere — could be cleared and burned only by great effort. Most discouraging of all, the new transcontinental railway was laid to the west of Edmonton, up the slope of the Rockies, where the growing season was shorter.

In 1911 the few settlers in Peace had high hopes that the Grand Trunk Pacific Railroad would traverse the Peace River country on its way from Edmonton to the Pacific. Slowly word began to trickle out; although there was no immediate transportation link to market, the hope of one brought settlers in — 900 in 1911, more than 9,000 in 1916. But the tracks from Edmonton did not run north; they turned west to Yellowhead Pass near Jasper. It was not until 1916 that a line from Edmonton to Peace River Landing was secured — the Edmonton, Dunvegan, and British Columbia Railroad, now called the Northern Alberta. Largely because of this, the population of Peace River country swelled by 18,000 in 1921, another 16,000 in 1926, and 48,000 in 1931. But the link with the West Coast had to wait until 1957, when the Pacific Great Eastern out of Vancouver was extended to Dawson Creek. There it met the Northern Alberta Railroad, belatedly fulfilling the dream of all Peace River settlers — an outlet to the Pacific.

The development of the agricultural frontier in Peace River country has been a phenomenon of the past half

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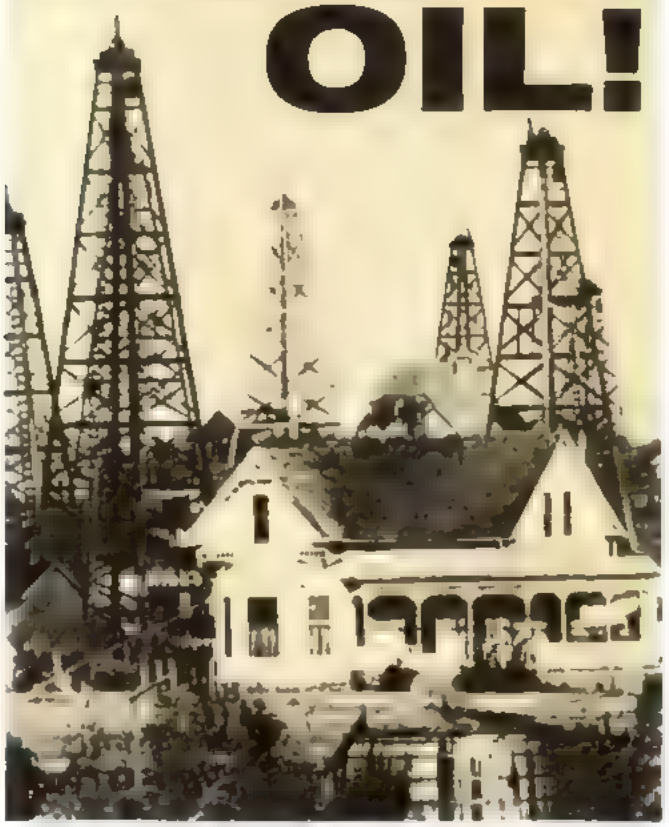
BOOM OIL!



Oklahoma Strikes It Rich!

by Stephen B. Oates

THOSE WHO KNOW the history of the far western frontier, or who have read Mark Twain's *Roughing It* or the tales of Bret Harte, are familiar with the story of the gold rush towns. The mention of Poker Flat, Hangtown, Whiskey Bar, Hell's Delight, Skunk Gulch, or Virginia City recalls smoking shack and tent cities clustered along a mountain stream in California, or on the windy slope of Mount Davidson in western Nevada. One thinks of thousands of prospectors, dreaming of a golden future, when a man could build his own mansion, and spend the rest of his life eating "three squares a day," drinking expensive whiskey, and throwing his money around on beautiful women. One thinks too of the savagery and human degradation that became almost synonymous with the gold rush: of hurdy-gurdy dance hall girls, of cardsharps and fortune tellers, of the cold-blooded murders, shoot-outs, and vigilante hangings — the explosions of violence that were symptomatic of a frontier which had too much individualism, too much lawlessness.

The West of Roaring Camp and Poker Flat was supposed to have ended with the coming of machine mining to the various gold rush frontiers in the late 1870's, when big business, with its trained engineers, replaced the independent prospector and placer miner. But in fact the drama of the gold boom Wild West was recast in the first quarter of the twentieth century, and re-enacted on a red plains stage in Oklahoma, when a series of spectacular oil discoveries, beginning with those at Cleveland and Glenn Pool in 1904 and 1905, electrified the nation almost as much as Sutter's gold strike had a half-century earlier. Overnight Oklahoma became another California, another Black Hills. The State, heretofore largely a cattle-raising and farming territory, had never witnessed anything like the human stampedes that accompanied each oil bonanza—not even during the land rushes of 1889 and 1893. They came in waves, ten to twenty thousand at a time, not only wheeler-dealer "boomers" but also representatives of eastern oil companies and down-and-out day laborers, followed by a veritable army of fraudulent stock promoters, gamblers, highjackers, and prostitutes, sweeping into Oklahoma "in all manners of conveyance, afoot and on horseback," in buggies, buckboards, bouncing automobiles, and railroad trains. At every oil field they came to, boom towns sprang up on the Oklahoma prairies, as violent and uninhibited as the gold rush towns had ever been.

Take the boom towns in the Cushing Field in Creek County, about thirty-five miles southwest of Tulsa. If one had visited Cushing in 1913, a year after the first gushers had blown in, one would have found the huge field clotted with shack towns interspersed with clusters of

derricks as far as the eye could see. In their names the towns honored Aaron Drumright, who owned the farm where the richest wells were pumping: there was Drumright itself, Gasright, Dropright, Alright, and Justright. Down by the dam on Tiger Creek, there was a new one—Damright.

Booming for oil had its drawbacks: quagmire in Seminole Field, 1926...

Drumright, a one-street town, was the hub of the great oil field. Its wooden buildings climbed up the slopes away from Tiger Creek in helter-skelter fashion; in the background, against the silver Oklahoma sky, one could see black pillars of smoke rising up from the slush pits that well crews were burning. The long main street teemed with men and horse-drawn wagons loaded down with steam boilers, masses of cable and wire, stacks of pipe, derrick timber, lumber for new buildings, and merchandise for Drumright's stores. One could feel the oil fever, catch the scent of gas and crude oil "that gets into a man's nostrils and causes a delightful inebriation, the symptoms tending toward a magnification of wealth lying around loose in the country." Prospectors in surface-pipe boots and swedge-nipple pants, boomers from Texas, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Wyoming and California, gathered along the plank sidewalks, "talking in terms of thousands" and swapping stories about such men as Tom Slick, who, after the first gushers had blown in, had hired every buggy, rig, buckboard, and horse in the area and had had them held under armed guard while he rode through the countryside leasing the best lands. Slick was to make two million dollars from his oil operations; and there were stories of many other oil men who had struck it rich (such as the old farmer who had gone insane when he received his first oil check). The atmosphere was "charged with superlative and hyperbole."

If one stayed after dark, one saw the other side of Drumright, when the saloons along Tiger Creek Avenue lit their kerosene lanterns, and fancy-dressed gamblers, with diamond rings on their fingers and thin cigars in their mouths, sat down at the tables and played solitaire with their marked cards, waiting for the grease-caked roustabouts who had come to town to "tear loose." But unfortunately—from a roustabout's point of view—Drumright did not have enough women to go around; there were no brothels as such, no dance halls or strip joints. Passions, lacking an outlet, ran high. "By merely turning one's head," said one oil-field veteran, "it was an easy matter to see a dozen fights in full blast at the same moment."

Men fought over anything—even when they were sober, which was not often. A gambler named Blackie shot a young tool-dresser in the leg merely because the fellow had refused to have a drink with him. In the lobby of one of the hotels, a lawyer spotted a man with whom he had been quarreling over a lease, and seized by an uncontrollable rage, picked up an iron stand and beat the man's skull in.

The savage side of Drumright's history left no official records. There were no law men in Drumright, not even a professional gunslinger with a badge, such as would "police" other Oklahoma boom towns. We can only guess the number of suicides, of deaths in violent accidents (an oil-field worker blown to pieces by carelessly handled nitroglycerin, somebody else burned to death). No chronicler tells us how many men died in drunken fist- and knife-fights during a Saturday night spree or

how many oily corpses were found in the bottom of storage tanks when companies had them dismantled as they prepared to move to another part of the field.

In time, though, some semblance of law and order came to the town when the oil company owners, who were losing money because of drunkenness and crime, brought in four United States marshals to clean up the place. The sale of liquor was made illegal. When the marshals left, the companies hired a justice of the peace and a constable, and contributed a fund of five thousand dollars for the strict enforcement of the law. But liquor-selling only went underground, and anybody who wanted a drink could still get one in a thinly-disguised "joint," which the law officers were paid to ignore -- a portent of what would happen nationwide once Prohibition began.

. . . and a commuter's tangle in Seminole City, 1927.

The history of Drumright was repeated in Ragtown in the Healdton Field, about one hundred and thirty miles to the southwest, near the Red River. When the Healdton boom began in earnest in 1913, the population of Ragtown mushroomed from a handful of oil company drillers to twenty thousand prospectors and their oil-boom leeches; they lived like an army, in thousands of wind-tattered tents around a cluster of stores called Wirt. But with the explosion of tents the name of the place was changed to Ragtown. "Rag Town was tough," said John P. "Slim" Jones, a veteran oil-field worker; "wild women were plentiful, gambling houses were wide open, and whiskey was sold over the bar." It was no more unusual "to find dead men lying around" Ragtown than it was around Drumright. A typical ten-day period left the following record: highjackers shot and robbed two men; a woman was burned to death when Carter County lawmen, led by Sheriff Buck Garrett, raided a whiskey joint; a drunken husband beat his wife nearly to death with his wooden leg; a man who had been on a prolonged drunk was found dead in a church and another died after a twelve-day drunk; a brawl broke out in a gambling casino in which two men were shot and two others were killed. When a dispute flared up in a second gambling house over alleged cheating, the winners made a run for it, only to be overtaken outside of town and beaten to death. Finally, a bandit held up a man at night and shot him dead when he failed to raise both hands. The victim had only one arm.

The ferocity of such outrages visibly disturbed Ragtown "respectables," and some of them tried to do something about it. The associates of the Dundee Petroleum Company, all of them devout Presbyterians, had a church built on the company's lease and hired the Reverend Albert M. Bean as pastor. The company made church attendance compulsory for all its employees and urged others to come. But the lawlessness continued unabated. "The millennium has not as yet been ushered into this place," a weary Reverend Bean reported. "The saddest mission I have to perform is to answer letters from mothers whose boys were killed or had died in drunkenness and rather than tell the facts in the case, I would ask someone else to write, which usually read like this:

DEAR MADAM: We herewith tender you our heartfelt sympathy in the loss of your noble son. He was a bright spot in our circle and we sorely miss him. The floral offerings at his funeral and the excellent casket in which he was buried were the best token of his large circle of warm friends.

I couldn't tear the bleeding heart of the mother open by

telling her that her boy was shot or had frozen to death while drunk or had been found dead after a prolonged debauch."

While Bean did his best to preach sanity and love at Ragtown, Sheriff Buck Garrett was not idle. Operating out of Ardmore, he at first made periodic forays against Ragtown's whiskey joints, confiscating illicit liquor and arresting bootleggers. But when his force had to come out every four days or so to put down a riot, Garrett appointed a special deputy for Ragtown. His name was Bud Ballew.

Ballew, a boyish-looking six-footer with blue eyes and wavy red hair, was deceptively tough—as tough as the thugs and roustabouts he had to control. He closed down whiskey joints, interfered in bawdy-house scrapes, pistol-whipped "dopeheads" who refused to leave town, fought a gun battle with one party of highjackers at a local cafe, and shot it out with another bandit gang in a motor car chase. Eight men died from his guns, but he did bring order to Ragtown. At least the number of illegal killings declined.

Yet the number of prostitutes and bootleggers remained high. And this, together with Ballew's high-handed manner of enforcing the law, led several respectable oil men to charge that the deputy sheriff was guilty of complicity with Ragtown's underground.

When the charges were made specific, Garrett replaced Ballew with another deputy, Frank Jones. Jones was not a gunfighter like Ballew, but he "didn't take any back talk." He stood up to local toughs and twice went to the hospital with bullets in his chest and leg. Yet Jones was also not above reproach. When he murdered a local gambler whose only crime was having had a misunderstanding with the deputy, oil men fighting for civilized law and order demanded his removal.

Ragtown's next lawman was Ruth Hynote, who came to town boasting that his two "smoke wagons" had thirty-six notches in them. "I came to Ragtown as a deputy sheriff," Hynote told a gathering at the movie house the night of his arrival. "This is said to be the worst town in the state. I came here to clean it up and I brought two fellows with me to help." He drew his six-shooters. "Here they are." "The town was very quiet for a few days," Slim Jones remembered. Then a rival deputy turned up in Ragtown, insisting that Bud Ballew had sent him out and that Hynote was to "bring in his commission." In a burst of fury, Hynote chased the man out of town.

Then Ballew himself rode out to Ragtown. He claimed to have orders from Garrett to settle this business "and leave only one deputy out there." The two deputies met in a Wild West showdown. In the ensuing gunplay, Ballew killed Hynote, reinforcing his claim to be the fastest draw in the Southwest. Ballew, with a gesture toward law and order, demanded that all the joints close down within a specified time. When an operator refused, swearing that he would die first, Ballew marched into the man's place, saw him reach for his gun, and shot him dead.

This brought such an outcry against Ballew that Garrett had to ask for his commission (only to be asked to resign himself, when his name was also associated with the oil-field underground). Ballew moved on to Wichita Falls, where another oil boom was underway, and was killed there by a Texas Ranger in a fracas at a domino casino.

Ragtown was perhaps the bloodiest boom town in Oklahoma oil-field history—one which to decent men, like the Reverend Bean and the associates of the Dundee Petroleum Company, must at times have resembled Hieronymus Bosch's nightmarish paintings of this world as Hell.

In May, 1920, Oklahoma was struck by still another boom. The E. W. Marland Oil Company brought in a gusher on the Osage Indian Reservation, up on the windswept plains of northern Oklahoma. The new discovery—reported to be one of the richest ever—sucked scores of transients out of the Healdton and Cushing fields. With their belongings packed in their single suitcases, they headed for a new mecca of wickedness—Burbank, with its satellites Pawhuska and Whizbang, located west of the old Cherokee Outlet near the Arkansas River.

Before the boom began, Burbank was a cluster of three windblown homes, a post office, a couple of trading posts, and a blacksmith shop. It was a forgotten town in the middle of one of the most barren regions the United States Government ever selected for an Indian reservation. The only people who came to Burbank were farmers and ranchers who bought weekly supplies there, and Indians who came in on Saturdays to get tobacco, meat, flour, blankets, denim, and calico. In the years since 1872, when the government had moved them there, the once-powerful Osages had been living in abject poverty, depending almost entirely on government rations and what the cattlemen paid them to lease their lands.

But in a fortnight the oil boom had transformed Burbank into the typical sprawling boom town, with enough

The smell of crude oil drew men like flies to honey; it was a smell "that gets into a man's nostrils and causes a delightful inebriation, the symptoms tending toward a magnification of wealth lying around loose in the country."

black gold spewing out of the nearby oil field to make the Osages richer than they could possible comprehend.

And the boom *did* make the Osages rich. After the initial wells came in, the Osage Tribal Council leased reservation lands to oil promoters at public auctions and then divided the proceeds among 2,229 Indians who held "headrights" or memberships in the tribe. In 1924, the peak year of production, each headright received $11,600 in royalties and lease money. Some Indians, however, had inherited many headrights, and received as much as $100,000 that year. Such incomes made the Osages, per capita, the wealthiest people in the world.

When they came to Burbank, they now rode in Cadillacs and Pierce-Arrows—only to abandon them on the side of the road when the tires blew out. They could easily afford another. They bought shiny glass trinkets, beads, bracelets, piles of expensive clothes, barrels of tobacco, and cases of good whiskey. The Indians either did not know or did not understand that national Prohibition had begun, and no bootlegger who had moved to Burbank to make a killing was going to explain it to them.

"Where there is sugar," as one magazine writer put it, "the flies collect"; and by 1921 hordes of white flies were buzzing in Burbank, feeding on the Osages in countless ways. Used car lots with garish banners and squawking loudspeakers multiplied. "Smart Fifth-Avenue shops" and hammer-and-nail stands vied with one another in tricking the dizzy Indians out of their money, selling them diamond rings and other jewelry, fire-colored silk rugs, "rare" vases and "imported" tapestries, Chinese plates and Japanese bowls, and assorted sets of silverware at prices that would make a millionaire wince. But

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PORTRAITS FOR A WESTERN ALBUM: II

by Joan Parker

William Jennings Bryan Meets the Twentieth Century

ON JULY 5, 1915, San Francisco was still celebrating the Glorious Fourth. A summer mist dampened everything but enthusiasm as the most elaborate military parade in the city's history fell in for the march through the streets to the Panama Pacific International Exposition. Preceded by volleys of fireworks, units of the United States Marines, national guard, coast artillery, ambulance corps, fire department, and mounted police, with assorted bands and patriotic floats ("Washington Crossing the Delaware," "The Spirit of '76") stepped out smartly along the route.

At the fair, the crowd gathered early. Attendance eventually topped one hundred thousand—more than May or Memorial Days, the Vanderbilt Cup, or the Joy Zone Carnival had drawn, second in numbers only to opening day. About noon the parade reached the reviewing stand, smothered in bunting and flanked by American flags, near the Fountain of Energy.

From the platform William Jennings Bryan watched impassively. ("... surrounded by officers of the Army and Navy in full uniform, with the gleam of swords and the glitter of gold braid everywhere about him, the former Secretary of State stood at silent attention for nearly an hour while the great parade of soldiers and sailors passed before him. The glint of bayonets was in his eyes, the somber color of stocked rifles met his glance.")

Barely a month before, Bryan had resigned from Woodrow Wilson's cabinet because he felt the President's second note to Germany regarding the sinking of the *Lusitania* would lead the country into war. "The President does not seem to realize that a great part of America lies on the other side of the Allegheny Mountains," he had told his wife and daughter. "These people have a right to be considered. I would not be true to the trust that thousands of Americans have imposed in me if I joined in any action that might lead to the loss of life and property."

Despite the war in Europe, the Commoner clung to his progressive beliefs: man was essentially good; progress was inevitable; Christianity would remake the world into a place of brotherhood and peace. Characteristically, nothing could shake his faith. He was determined to take his plea for peace to the people. ("The humblest citizen in all the land, when clad in the armor of a righteous cause, is stronger than all the hosts of error," he had said nineteen years earlier in his Cross of Gold speech.) His trip to the West Coast was part of his crusade

Abuse had greeted his dissent from all sides, and many thought his resignation a calculated political move toward yet another try for the Presidency in 1916. Wilson knew better. "He is *absolutely* sincere," said the President. "That is what makes him dangerous."

The drums of the parade had scarcely died away when Bryan came forward to speak to the largest audience he had ever addressed. The mass surged towards him, straining for every sound of the celebrated voice. His theme was "Peace."

Scheduled introductory material, including Edwin Markham reading his "Ode to Freedom" and a soprano singing "My Own United States," were hastily jettisoned when shouts for "Bryan! Bryan!" produced immediate presentation of the speaker. *That he had something vital to say, no one doubted*—a reporter wrote—*nor could it be doubted the time and place had been well chosen. On the edge of the westmost city by the shore of the westmost sea, amid marvels commemorating the mightiest triumph of peace—this was an occasion worthy of a great oration, a scene worthy of a great orator.*

"This nation has given richly of ideals to the world," Bryan said, "a traffic more precious than that of merchandise, and one wherein we are proud to have the balance of trade against us. This is the measure of our country's greatness."

He spoke as if divining what was in the inmost hearts of his hearers . . . as if he were saying the things which should lift the shadow of war from his country.

"A victory secured through threat of force is only temporary; the resentment which it arouses and the spirit of revenge to which it gives birth robs the triumph of its permanence . . . a victory secured by persuasion is lasting and lays the foundation for cooperation."

Bryan admitted that his present position is not supported by precedent; that he took it knowing that history was against him; but he declared that his side is the one of the future and that his opponents represent a dying cause. . . . It was the old, old gospel of love he spoke .

When Bryan had finished, the multitude exploded in three cheers. Art Smith—billed as "the brilliant young birdman"—buzzed the Tower of Jewels and released four snow-white doves.

The spell broken, everyone was suddenly in a hurry, moving on to the next event. Although the Peerless Leader had been advertised as "stellar attraction" of the day, there was more to come: "Next in attractiveness will be the blowing up of an imitation torpedo boat destroyer by a submerged mine as the craft is presumed to be hastening from the Golden Gate to sink the battleship *Oregon*. Major C. H. Whitney, commander of the Presidio, will direct the blowing up of the imitation destroyer at 3 P.M. opposite the California Building."

Nobody wanted to miss that. □

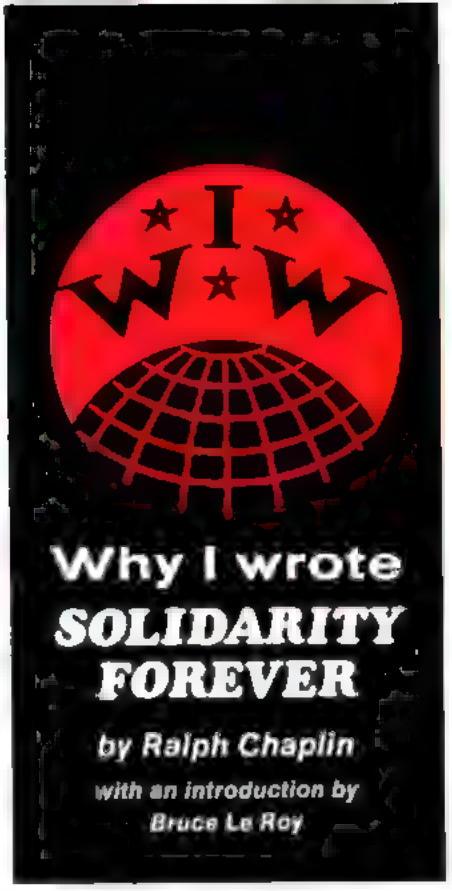
Joan Parker *is a professional writer, editor, and researcher with a particular interest in the sprightly details of San Francisco's past. Her work has appeared in such magazines as* Westways *and* San Francisco.

SOLIDARITY FOREVER

Lyrics by Ralph Chaplin (Tune: "John Brown's Body")

It is we who plowed the prairies; built the cities where they trade;
Dug the mines and built the workshops; endless miles of railroad laid.
Now we stand, outcast and starving, 'mid the wonders we have made;
But the Union makes us strong.

CHORUS: ***Solidarity forever!***
Solidarity forever!
Solidarity forever!
For the Union makes us strong.



In the pantheon of American labor history there is a very special place for Ralph Chaplin, the man and his work. As the poet laureate of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), he is probably remembered best for giving organized labor its fighting theme song, "Solidarity Forever." But to those of us who were privileged to work with him at the Washington State Historical Society during the last few years of his life, Ralph Chaplin will always be honored for more, much more.

His love affair with the Pacific Northwest was revealed time and again in his writings as well as in his conversation. This rugged region of mountains and Puget Sound, of epic pioneering and great conflicts provided a satisfying backdrop for the unfolding drama of labor history. The "Free Speech" fights at Spokane, Everett, Tacoma, and other cities on the Northwest Coast were milestones to Ralph Chaplin. He reported the crises that exploded into gunfire and tragedy at Everett and Centralia. In the 1960 essay that follows this introduction, Chaplin writes: "Even at this late hour I am more grimly convinced than ever that neither the song itself ["Solidarity Forever"] nor the organization that sparked it could have emerged from any environment other than the Pacific Northwest in the afterglow of the rugged period of American pioneering."

Further on, he says: "It is true that "Solidarity Forever" was written in Chicago, but it is also true that nobody ever heard of it until fifty thousand striking Puget Sound loggers bellered it out to a world that didn't care a hoot about the problems of voteless and cruelly exploited 'timber beasts'."

In his autobiography, Wobbly: The Rough and Tumble Story of an American Radical, *Chaplin tells how he began the writing of "Solidarity Forever" during the Kanawha miners' strike in Huntington, West Virginia. The song was not finished until January 17, 1915, in Chicago, on the day of a giant "Hunger Demonstration." The twenty-eight-year-old author already had an intimate knowledge of labor conflict, beginning with his father's account of the Haymarket Square Riot in the strife-torn Chicago of 1886, and proceeding through Ralph's personal involvement with strikes in Chicago and West Virginia.*

Wobbly *is the sensitive and honest account of the evolution of an artistic youth into a rugged and effective labor editor, who survived riots, beatings, and imprisonment for his political beliefs. As the right-hand man of Big Bill Haywood, the crusading president of the IWW, Chaplin was generally where the action was. However, much was deleted from the first draft of* Wobbly, *as the original manuscript in the Washington State Historical Society shows. The author told me that the editors of the press that published* Wobbly *also cut many passages from the book.*

By the time Ralph Chaplin joined the staff of the Washington State Historical Society, more than a decade had elapsed since the publication of his autobiography. After he had been there nearly two years, I asked him why he didn't write a kind of "addendum" to Wobbly, *giving some of his ideas about the great changes that had taken place in the American labor movement since he joined it as a youth. He was hard to convince, arguing that the book told most of the story. But finally he succumbed to the idea that he owed it to posterity to make some final statement.*

With one major exception, "Why I Wrote 'Solidarity Forever'" is the last important bit of writing that Ralph completed before his death in 1961. That exception is his epic poem, Only the Drums Remembered: A Memento for Leschi, *which is the distillation of a lengthy and*

sympathetic study of the dispossessed Indian. The protagonist of the poem is a chief of the Nisqually tribe of western Washington. History has pretty well proven that Leschi, executed on a trumped-up charge of murder, served as scapegoat for the Indian War of 1855. Chaplin felt a strange, almost mystical identification with the great Indian leader. What his poem was to Chaplin the poet, "Why I Wrote 'Solidarity Forever' *" was to Chaplin the labor historian.*

He predicted that the article "would cause equal consternation to the godly and the ungodly." (Characteristically, he immediately credited the remark to William Lyons Phelps, who made it upon the occasion of his appointment as Literary Editor for Esquire *magazine). Vigorously independent in his judgments, Ralph would not have been overly concerned with whatever consternation the essay might inspire. The years of physical and literary combat with one Establishment or another had toughened him against reaction. He speaks here with the voice of another age—an age in which a man was often held to account for what he said in no uncertain terms. In spite of the sharp vigor of his opinions, however, it would be a mistake to assume that Chaplin is simply calling down a plague upon both labor and management in the present age. To accept that interpretation would do injustice to a truly complex mind. Ralph saw in the evolution of the labor movement a deplorable distortion of its beginnings, yet he never abandoned hope in the same "grass roots unionism" that had marked his era. But let him speak for himself in this first publication of his only supplement to* Wobbly, *a book now accepted as a classic of American labor history.*

Bruce Le Roy

WHEN I WROTE "Solidarity Forever," I had no way of knowing that less than half a century later it would be keynoting the none-too-reassuring news that an unborn generation would learn about on tomorrow's newscasts. But that is the way things worked out. Recently I have been asked to tell the story. Frankly, I hardly know where to start.

The fact that an obscure labor editor happened to write a song like that is of no particular historical importance. What is important is that it was written at all, timed as it was, almost to a split second, to indicate a tide in the affairs of men that was destined to put a large part of the world's population either behind the Iron Curtain of totalitarian statism or in the uneasy rocking chairs of the Welfare State. In spite of intentions that were emphatically otherwise, that seems to be the sour note on which the story ended—the story of the song, that is—not the story of the turbulent era of pioneering labor history that went into its making. If the people who read these lines are not familiar with the conditions from which "Solidarity Forever" emerged, they will more than likely be unable to understand the significance of the banner headlines in the morning newspapers.

One thing is certain: nothing of that sort went into the making of "Solidarity Forever." It was originally designed to meet the needs of a nonconformist, nonpolitical labor organization that was critical of the crudely divided craft unions of the times and practiced voluntary libertarian teamwork at the point of production to obtain its objectives through the "One Big Industrial Union." The name of this crusading organization was the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Historians using the hysterical newspaper headlines of the day as source material have depicted its stormy career in colors blacker than the hinges of hell. Erudite professors, quoting one another as "authorities," label it as a conspiracy of alien arsonists and dynamiters, the purpose of which was to place all law-abiding citizens at the mercy of the mob. Infuriated by the IWW's libertarian singleness of purpose, the Communists have fought it more bitterly than they have at any time fought the hated bourgeoisie. As for the author of "Solidarity Forever," he is not at all unhappy to have been associated with the very first indigenous antistatist, antitotalitarian labor organization that Moscow saw fit to liquidate—and for good and sufficient reasons. If present-day historians do not get this seemingly confused picture into focus, their lucubrations will be something other than authentic history.

I wrote "Solidarity Forever" at a time when there was a life-or-death struggle between fiercely competitive ideological groups to see which of them would shape the future of the then embryonic left-wing labor movement. It was a knockdown-drag-out fight with no holds barred, and every available weapon from gentle persuasion to brass knuckles was used to gain a fair or unfair advantage. Indicative of the final outcome is the fact that it was returning Russian-born IWW members who manned the Soviet Union's last barricade of freedom when Trotsky's janissaries liquidated the anti-Communist sailors of the Red fleet after their unsuccessful rebellion at Kronstadt. Many of those young men and women came from Chicago's West

Side close to the IWW headquarters, their rich voices singing what the Communists sneeringly referred to as the "Anarchists' Marching Song." As for me, the thunderous rhythm was full of the revolutionary affirmation I tried to weave into the pattern of "Solidarity Forever." Those voices still haunt me, coming as they did from the Russia of Turgenev, Tolstoi, Kropotkin, and Pasternak.

All of this harkens back to the beginning of the war of ideas that was starting to jell in the first decades of the last century, and that was to split the contenders into warring camps for a long time to come. It is my opinion that those ideas have made history, and a whale of a lot of it. Unless present-day historians can identify and define the conflicting elements involved in this confused situation, they will be unable to make the world upheaval that followed in their wake understandable. Every now and then some nitwit theoretician will brush the IWW aside with the owlish observation that we were "the Communists of those days!" Certainly the ideas of such divergent personalities as Lucy Parsons, Victor Berger, Daniel De Leon and William Dudley Haywood were important factors in the struggle, but it was the larger clash of irreconcilable social and economic philosophies that met head on and refused to merge that was back of the prevailing ferment.

What hung precariously in the balance at the time "Solidarity Forever" was written was first a choice between political action at the ballot box and direct action at the point of production for the attainment of immediate objectives, and secondly a choice between armed insurrection and the general strike as a means of

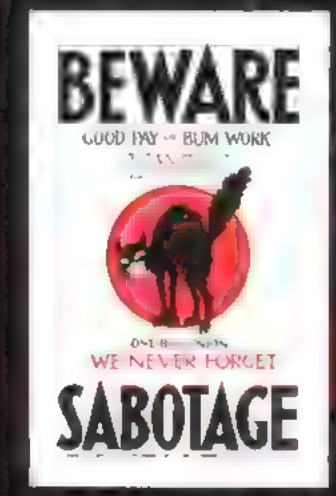
TIME TO ORGANIZE!

THE IWW STICKERETTS

by Tony Bubka

Ralph Chaplin, the librettist for "Solidarity Forever," did not confine himself to the creation of rousing songs. Artist, poet, pamphleteer, and rebel editor, Chaplin spread his talents in several directions, most of them concerned with furthering the goals of the "one big union." Chaplin had joined the IWW in 1913, and by 1917 had become managing editor of *Solidarity*, the union's official voice. Two years before that, he had come up with the design for one of the most ubiquitous items in the organization's propaganda war with capitalism: "Silent Agitators," adhesive stickers that first appeared in an advertisement in *Solidarity* on November 20, 1915. Five hundred thousand of these "stickerette" had been printed, and members were urged to "let one of these persistent thought-compelling designs do for you what a long argument oft times fails to accomplish. Reach a thousand workers where only one was possible."

Eleven different designs comprised the first series of stickerette. All were printed in red and black ink on gummed paper in sizes that ran from two inches square to nearly three by four inches. William ("Big Bill") Haywood, the Western Federation of Miners organizer who had come out of the West in 1905 to help weld together what became the IWW, supplied several ideas for stickerette, and the brand of acrid belligerence that marked his suggestions was common to the rest.



The stickerette sported various devices intended to symbolize one contention or another. Wooden shoes represented the workingman's revolution, frequently supported by an appropriate slogan: "Kick your way out of slavery; the foot in the wooden shoe will rock the world." A stopped clock often appeared as the symbol of stopped production and the power of the strike. Red flags abounded on many stickerette, particularly in 1917, carrying with them all the militant connotations of rabid socialism. The device that dominated, however, was the black cat, originated by Ralph Chaplin. Labor folklorist Archie Green has said that "the black cat is an old symbol for malignant and sinister purposes, foul deeds, bad luck, and witchcraft with countless superstitious connections. Wobblies extended the black-cat figure visually to striking on the job, direct action, and sabotage." Chaplin wrote in *Wobbly that* his " 'sab-cat' was supposed to symbolize the 'slow-down' as a means of striking on the job," and an IWW slogan had it that "the sab-cat has nine lives and no conscience."

putting "the parasitic and outmoded capitalist system in its place." It was as simple at that. Either way the goose of the private enterpriser would have been cooked. As for the young author of "Solidarity Forever," he had already seen too many mobs in action to relish the prospect of bloody revolution summed up in the hateful words of "La Carmignole," which the Commies sang so boisterously in their halls and during street demonstrations. There was no such thing as "co-existence" in those days; it was either whole-hog or nothing. Co-existence was destined to come later on, when the Commies had the world by the tail with a downhill pull and had developed the fine art of liquidation to a point where it was a cat-and-mouse routine to make the fun last longer. We were all that way. It was a question as to whether those who dished it out could take it.

Perhaps it is worth noting that Nikita Khrushchev was born the same year the IWW was organized. That was also the year the first Russian Revolution was put down bloodily in St. Petersburg, and both "Babushka" and Gershuni were touring the United States telling about it. I was eighteen years old at that time. Confronting me and other idea-hungry nonconformist youngsters at that moment was a choice among armed insurrection of the Nevsky Prospect variety, the political action of the "yellow" Victor Berger kind of socialism, the craft unionism favored by Samuel Gompers, or the "red" socialism of Debs coupled with the concept of revolutionary industrial unionism favored by Haywood and the fighting Western Federation of Miners. There was also a weird admixture of politics and industrial

unionism dreamed up by the dogmatic Daniel De Leon, but that seemed hardly worth mentioning. Because of the fact that my father was, as a freight yard tower-man, an active participant in the ARU railroad strike of 1894 in Chicago, I had witnessed no small part of the violence from the front porch of the cottage adjoining the Pan Handle yards where we were then living. It was from that vantage point that I heard Debs appeal for the kind of united strike action that would make violence unnecessary. To me this made sense. Talking these matters over with Debs long afterwards, my father confided to me that the sight of bloodshed always made him sick. This I could understand also, maybe because I had been reading Shelley at the time I first read the *Communist Manifesto*.

It was from the lips of Eugene Victor Debs that I first heard the word "solidarity" uttered, and from Debs also that I first learned of the Western Federation of Miners, and of Bill Haywood, who, like Debs, brought down on his battle-scarred head the wrath of the employers and the invective of the capitalist press. Naturally, I could not remain neutral. It wasn't in the cards, however, for me to meet Haywood until eight years later and through him to contact the One Big Union of the Industrial Workers of the World that was to become a lifetime dedication. Debs remained in the Socialist Party, which he had organized in Woodstock Jail after having been persuaded that the time was ripe for a combined labor union and Labor Party crusade in behalf of the economic underdog. He started out frankly critical of both politics and politicians, sharply disagreeing with those who looked upon political action as a cure-all. Many of us thought that Debs looked upon the Socialist Party as a means of appealing to splinter nonconformist groups for united action against a common enemy. About that time Charles Edward Russell called the cut in the *International Socialist Review* by charging that "anyone who sits at that grimy board cannot remain uncontaminated." This was the policy of the *Review* at the time I was selected to take Seymour Stedman's place on the board of directors. I was then twenty-one years old and needed no coaxing to declare war on Victor Berger and his craft-union–political action fixation.

Haywood, in complete agreement with Debs at that time, was denouncing Berger and Gompers as "two labor fakirs tarred with the same stick." Debs went so far as to beg his huge audiences to see to it that he never was elected to public office lest he too succumb to the temptation to misuse power. Debs in the "red" Socialist Party, and Haywood in the "red" Western Federation of Miners always held up—over and above the winning and maintenance of living wages and humane working conditions—the vision of a free world in which man's inhumanity to man would become a thing of the past. That was why they were "revolutionary." Debs, like Haywood, took the position that union officialdom is not the master of the rank-and-file membership, but its servant. That is why, in their own estimation at least, they were "democratic." In my humble opinion they both were right in proclaiming that no one gains, and everybody loses, by getting masses of men to march shoulder to shoulder in the wrong direction. "Solidarity Forever" was written on the assumption that we knew where we were going and knew how to get there. Overseas we saw the Socialist and Labor parties becoming more and more hidebound with Marxist dogmatism. Tom Mann and Jim Larkin in Britain, and the various syndicalist movements of the Continent and Latin America, met with our whole-hearted approval. What we were seeking was a united labor movement—"all for one and one for all"—and it was this principle that I tried to embody in "Solidarity Forever." That is why, if for no other reason, that the story of "Solidarity Forever" may be worth the telling.

At all events, my "Marching Song of Industrial Freedom" has been making history for a long time (so I am informed), and it is still going strong. It was launched into a world in which issues were shaping up that would shake the established order to its foundations. One part of the American heritage is the heritage of conflict, this for the good and sufficient reason that our years of conflict have shaped our national destiny more significantly than our uneasy intervals of peace. No one had to spell out the meaning of the "class struggle" for us; it was one of the inescapable realities of our daily lives. I didn't write "Solidarity Forever" for ambitious politicians or for job-hungry labor fakirs seeking a ride on the gravy train. I wrote it, or thought I was writing it, for a bunch of "timber beasts," "gandy dancers," and "harvest stiffs" who wouldn't have had a full belly or a place to flop if they hadn't learned to become "the stick-together guys that organize." These were my people, and they looked to me to write this kind of

song for them. I prefer to think that it was they, rather than any special skill on my part, that breathed the breath of life into whatever it was that made the words and rhythm click. That it became the theme song of the "fighting, singing IWW" is understandable; that it became, at a later date, the theme song of the not-so-needy, not-so-worthy, so-called "industrial unions" spawned by an era of compulsory unionism is not so understandable. Something also beyond the wildest stretch of my imagination was the possibility of Big Unionism competing with Big Business on fairly equal terms—and using identical promotional devices, including singing commercials—to keep business booming. That sort of "solidarity," in my humble opinion, is nothing to brag about, or sing about.

The Industrial Workers of the World, at the time "Solidarity Forever" was written, was distinctly indigenous. Even at this late hour I am more grimly convinced than ever that neither the song itself nor the organization that sparked it could have emerged from any environment other than the Pacific Northwest in the afterglow of the rugged period of American pioneering. If we had waited for the industrialized East to inspire what went into its making, we might still be waiting. Neither was it a foreign importation. Few old timers agreed with Brissenden's thesis that the IWW was a rehash of European syndicalism. To us it was more akin to what Thomas Jefferson had in mind when he declared, "The government that governs best is the government that governs least." The raw frontier did that to men.

It is true that "Solidarity Forever" was written in Chicago, but it is also true that nobody ever heard of it until fifty thousand striking Puget Sound loggers bellered it out to a world that didn't care a hoot about the problems of vote-less and cruelly exploited "timber beasts." It is also true that the young author of "Solidarity Forever" had been shaped by bitterly contested labor struggles, including a two-year strike against the mine owners of Kanawha County, West Virginia, but that it took the sustained militancy of the grass-roots Western Federation of Miners, in the face of equally ferocious opposition, to put the hefty punch into "Solidarity Forever" that later on made it the theme song of the entire latter-day labor movement.

This is not the attempt of a nostalgic old-timer to impress a less ideologically alert generation with the notion that "there were giants in those days," and that the author of "Solidarity Forever" was one of them. The fact is that there were no supermen among us—and none would have been tolerated. We were faced with the choice of being either true-blue rebels or "scissorbills." The "scissorbill" was that belly-aching element among the unorganized that would rather remain unorganized than do anything about it. When the IWW harvest workers announced, "We are out for a winter stake this summer, and we want no scabs around," they confirmed the declaration by singing "Solidarity Forever" instead of "Hallelujah, I'm a Bum." And it worked, at least to the extent that the niggardly "going wage" was quickly discarded in favor of the regional five-dollar day. When a hostile "town clown" would confront the union harvest stiffs at the freight yards, demanding, "Who are the leaders here?" the unanimous response was, "We are all leaders—what are you going to do about it?" When asked by a police court judge to define the word "scissorbill," Joe Hill is reported to have replied, "The 'scissorbill,' your Honor, is an 'I guy'; we happen to be 'we guys.'" It was as simple as that to Joe Hill and his fellow workers. That is why, in my opinion, Joe Hill's satirical "Mr. Block" was far more definitive than "Solidarity Forever."

All that belongs to yesterday, but it is needed to make labor's yesterdays understandable, particularly in relation to the crazy-quilt pattern of industrial relationships that grew out of them. Among those of us who managed to survive those stormy pioneering years, there is no one who does not look with a rather jaundiced eye upon the "success" of "Solidarity Forever." All of us deeply resent seeing a song that was uniquely our own used as a singing commercial for the soft-boiled type of post-Wagner Act industrial unionism that uses million-dollar slush funds to persuade their congressional office boys to do chores for them—chores that the case-hardened crusaders of the old days were eager to do themselves for the good of the Cause, with their bellies flapping against their backbones.

Many people these days wonder how Joe Hill could stop traffic on busy skid row street corners singing such hilarious songs as "Pie in the Sky" or "Mr. Block," or how he could refuse to be blindfolded when he faced the firing squad at the Utah State Prison, and himself give the order for the fatal volley that made his name the symbol of dedicated service to the economic underdog. Or why the striking loggers on the S. S. *Verona* chose to die singing

"Hold the Fort" and "Solidarity Forever" in a rain of bullets from a mob of respectable businessmen on the docks at Everett, Washington. Or why young Wesley Everest, union organizer and World War I veteran, was lynched at midnight from "Hangman's Bridge" in Centralia, Washington. Or why my good friend and fellow worker Frank Little was given the same treatment by hired Anaconda gun-thugs for attempting to organize the mercilessly exploited hardrock miners at Butte, Montana. This could go on and on, every word of it true, but only to be discounted as the resentment of an old codger mumbling through his beard.

It is still my contention, however, that the story of organized labor, both in principle and practice, is too important to be misinterpreted or swept under the rug of labor-hating pressure groups or individuals. I contend also that when the labor movement ceases to be a Cause and becomes a business, the end product can hardly be called progress. It must be remembered that my "Battle Hymn of Industrial Democracy" was tailored to meet the unique requirements of free-born, pioneering Americans who resented the status of unresisting wage slavery; and that it was critical of the archaic craft unionism of those days because of disillusionment with repeated and uniformly futile efforts to find a political answer to pressing economic problems. More than ever before in a long lifetime I am convinced that there are no such answers. To me the record clearly reveals that "anyone who sits at that grimy board cannot remain uncontaminated."

An outstanding example of what set the IWW apart from the stuffed-

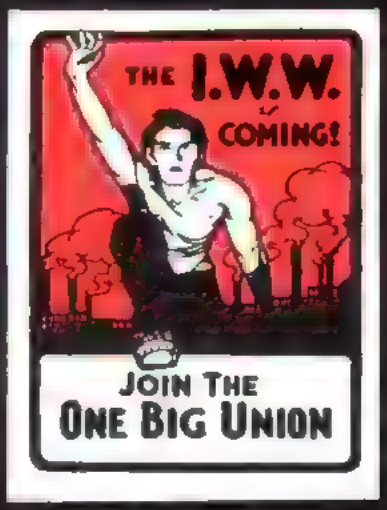
Anti-war propaganda had been on the agenda of the IWW for many years before American entrance into World War I, but in 1917 it reached heights that contributed significantly to the organization's downfall. One reflection of this vigorous denunciation of war was a large stickerette that carried a distribe first written in 1911 and often attributed to Jack London, "The Military Ideal":

YOUNG MAN

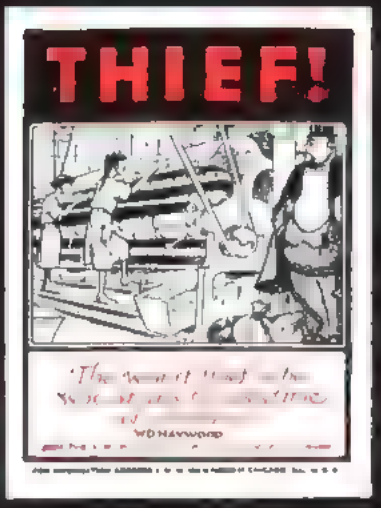
The lowest aim in your life is to be a good soldier. The "good" soldier never tries to distinguish right from wrong. He never thinks, never reasons; he only obeys. If he is ordered to fire upon his fellow-citizens, on his neighbors, on his relatives, he obeys without hesitation. If he is ordered to fire down a crowded street when the poor are clamoring for bread, he obeys and sees the gray hairs of age stained with red and the life-tide gushing from the breasts of women, and feels neither remorse nor sympathy. If he is ordered off as one of a firing squad to execute a hero or benefactor, he fires without hesitation, though he knows the bullet will pierce the noblest heart that ever beat in human breast. A good soldier is a blind, heartless, soulless, murderous machine. He is not a man, not even a brute, for brutes only kill in self-defense. All that is human in him, all that is divine in him, all that constitutes a man has been sworn away when he took the enlistment oath. His mind, his conscience, and his very soul, are in keeping of his office. No man ever can fall lower than a soldier—it is a depth beneath which we cannot go.

Young Man, Don't Be a Soldier—Be a Man

A second series of stickeretts was published in 1917, and a notice in a March issue of *Solidarity* proclaimed: "Stickeretts. One million of them, black and red, new impressions, fifteen designs (four new ones). Envelopes of 150, 25 cents. Box of ten envelopes, $1.50. Stick 'em up!" April 28, 1917, was declared Stickeretts Day, and a million "Silent Agitators" were sold — the entire stock. Three million more were printed for the May Day demonstrations the following month. May Day, and the red flags that went with it, helped ignite an official outrage already primed by the anti-war sentiments of the union.



In September, 1917, all the officials of the IWW were arrested; simultaneously throughout the country "the U.S. Marshals settled down on the belongings of the IWW like a cloud of Kansas grasshoppers on fields of wheat." Among the items substantiating the government's allegations of subversion, bolshevism, anarchy, and conspiracy were the stickeretts.



On April 1, 1918, 101 Wobblies went on trial before Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis (a crusading jurist with such fundamentalist inclinations that he was later hired to "clean up" major league baseball). All were found guilty, and Chaplin, with many others, was sentenced to a term in the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. Chaplin's sentence was commuted by President Harding in 1923, and he was released. By then, however, the great days of the IWW had ended, done in by official suppression and the prosperity of the postwar years. "Solidarity Forever" lived on, but Chaplin's stickeretts passed into the ephemeral stream of history. □

shirt organizational pattern of its day was the 1916 drive to put union cards in the pockets of the unorganized, voteless army of boxcar bindle stiffs who were expected to fill the breadbaskets of the nation that eventful year. The IWW Agricultural Workers Union, Local 400, armed with the *Little Red Song Book* plus a lot of selfless crusading fervor, did its job so well that it sent hysterical scare headlines screaming from coast to coast. How it appeared through the eyes of a competent, history-minded contemporary is preserved for the record by James Jones, the noted author of *From Here to Eternity*. An imprisoned World War II soldier, describing the spectacular story of the Spokane free speech fight that preceded Local 400's successful operation, nostalgically recalls the dedicated IWW militancy of his boyhood days:

You don't remember the Wobblies. You were too young. Or else you weren't born yet. What they really were was a religion. They were welded together with a vision we don't possess. It was their vision that made them great. And it was their belief that made them powerful. And sing! You never heard anyone sing the way those guys sang unless it was for a religion. Bunches of them, ten or twenty at a time, out in the harvest fields or in one of their free speech fights, sitting in the barred windows of the second floor of the jail singing the songs that Joe Hill had written for them or Ralph Chaplin's "Solidarity Forever," a singing that swelled through the town until nobody could escape it.

The story of "Solidarity Forever" would have finished on a glory note had it finished right there. At the time I had no way of knowing that

it would go into orbit, both with the type of unionism with which it had so little in common, and with the Red Star of monolithic statism that was already rising ominously in the East. Long after the IWW had seemingly joined the best laid plans of mice and men, "Solidarity Forever" continued to make headlines in one major strike area after another, as such practical labor leaders as Walter Reuther and Harry Bridges, pluming themselves with stolen feathers, hit pay dirt where the "pesky-go-abouts" of the IWW had been prospecting. Finally, the AFL-CIO's elaborately printed *Songs of Work and Freedom* appeared, with "Solidarity Forever" emerging from the uneasy grave in which the IWW refused to lie buried as "the most popular union song on the North American Continent. . . . If a union member knows only one song it is almost sure to be this. It has become, in effect, the anthem of the labor movement."

This, of course, was a high honor and one not unappreciated, but what disturbed me was a clipping from the *New York Times,* bearing the same date line, that a promising presidential candidate was singing it from a soapbox to a bunch of strikers in Wisconsin in an effort to cinch his nomination in the primaries. Even less reassuring were tidings that "Solidarity Forever" had been translated into a number of African dialects and used effectively by lesser tribes beyond the law, together with made-in-Moscow banners bearing the made-in-Moscow slogan: "White Men Go Home!"

Rather belatedly, I was learning that solidarity for solidarity's sake is not enough. Seemingly, with the best of intentions, I had unleashed an element that made the high-voltage emotional power generated more potent than the instrument itself. Whatever it was, Walt Whitman must have had the same thing in mind when he spoke of "songs that sometimes come back to their authors dripping blood." This I might profitably have kept in mind when it was scribbled hastily on a crumpled scrap of paper while members of the Western Federation of Miners were being shot down like jack rabbits from the Colorado state boundary to the Canadian border. At that time also I recalled the "Good Gray Poet" and the unforgettable Walt Whitman's caution: "To the States, or any one of them, or to any city of the States, resist much, obey little. Once unquestioning obedience, once fully enslaved, no nation, state, city of this earth ever afterward resumes its liberty. . . . When there are no more memories of heroes and martyrs, and when all life and all the souls of men and women are discharged from that part of the earth, then only shall liberty or the idea of liberty be discharged from that part of the earth, and the infidel come into full possession."

In my poor opinion it was grassroots, frontier Americanism of this kind that sparked both the IWW and the songs of solidarity that set it apart from the more "practical" and less dedicated craft unions that delivered the goods but had little to sing about. Those of us who gave the best years of our lives in the service of the singing, fighting IWW were enriched in the giving. At all times — on the soapbox, on the picket-line, and even in prison — we were aware of being part of something more important than our own unimportant selves, a Cause worth living for and, if needs be, dying for. We didn't enjoy ourselves; we enjoyed one another. We didn't envy the high and mighty of our generation; we pitied them, as the early Christians must have pitied the pagans. At heart we were probably the world's worst snobs, so sure were we that nothing on earth could be deader than a dead tycoon, and that nothing could be more deathless than a Cause beyond the reach of death.

Even on the sunset trail I fail to see where any advantage has been gained for anyone alive today by substituting the tyranny of capitalistic exploiters with the even more merciless tyranny of a new elite of nonfunctional commissars, bureaucrats, and egg-noggin' do-gooders. We of the IWW made mistakes and paid for them dearly, but were we so wrong, after all, in contending with Thomas Jefferson that "the government that governs best is the government that governs least"? Or with Patrick Henry, who, spurning the principle of involuntary servitude, shouted out to a similarly divided world: "Give me liberty or give me death"? It seems to me, at this late hour, that the stage is all set for the final conflict, not between bourgeoisie and the proletariat, as Marx predicted, but between the parasitic elite of totalitarianism and freeborn men who prize liberty more than they do their own lives. Either Man's last, best hope of freedom is at stake or it isn't. It just happens that the author of "Solidarity Forever" was convinced when he wrote it, and is still convinced, that there can be no co-existence with involuntary servitude. We learned this lesson in the school of hard knocks. We learned it early in

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The Siege and Conquest of a National Park

by Richard G. Lillard

"*One of the important questions now before us is the question of the admission of automobiles to national parks and the terms upon which they should be admitted if they are to be admitted, either to this park or to any other park*". This crucial, incisive remark was made in Yosemite Valley by Secretary of the Interior Walter L. Fisher on October 14, 1912. The occasion was the second National Park Conference, attended by dozens of important persons from coast to coast: representatives of the American Civic Association; national forest and park officials, including Clement S. Ucker, chief clerk of the Interior Department; hotel, stagecoach, and railroad men, including F. F. Harvey, manager of dining-car service on the Santa Fe Railway. Many Californians were present: Frank Miller of Riverside Mission Inn; Yosemite concessionaires like David Curry; businessmen from nearby mountain towns; big-city automobile dealers, and leaders of the several automobile associations. Conservationists were among them—notably John Muir, author of magazine articles that had made Yosemite famous, and William E. Colby, his heir apparent, secretary of the Sierra Club.

The conference came about after years of agitation by individual automobile owners and their spokesmen to get machines admitted to Yosemite Valley, that prestigious little glacial slot in the Sierra Nevada, that colossal exhibit of granite domes and misty waterfalls, that *Ahwahnee* or "deep grassy place" of the Indians, with more square miles to its sides than to its level bottom. In 1912 this climactic example of "America the Beautiful" was hard to reach and taboo to cars. The conferees had approached the Valley in private automobiles or by railroad, but they entered it in buggies, stagecoaches, or motor stages based in the Valley. By government edict all three of the one-lane privately owned access roads were closed to automobiles.

Doughnut-shaped Yosemite National Park had been created in 1890, around the state-owned Yosemite Valley, which had been added in 1906 to plug the hole. It was as large as Rhode Island, but all the pressure then as now was to get into the sacred inner citadel—the Valley itself—only seven miles long and always less than a mile wide, smaller than the total area of some modern airports.

El Capitan and a pioneer Locomobilist, July, 1900. . . . According to some authorities this was the first automobile to enter Yosemite Valley.

It was at this conference that the automobile issue was most lengthily discussed, and the decision was more or less made to let automobiles in. Men spoke with self-assumed prophetic powers about automobiles—for the history of the automobile lay ahead. But the conference came a year before any automobiles got in and years before the rise of a traffic problem that is increasingly unsolved. It came when neither California nor the federal government had any road-building programs, before there was a highway contractors' lobby, before there were any large automobile corporations, even before there was any national parks agency.

The conference of 1912 remains central and symbolic in national park and conservation history, for the arguments over Yosemite Valley were arguments over the locale that had generated the national park idea in the 1860's. The Valley had become the first great showplace of the great West, ranking with the veteran American attractions of Niagara Falls, the Hudson River Gorge, the Natural Bridge of Virginia, and Mammoth Cave—none of which embodied such a variety of features, gigantic or delicate. And the conference was held just as Americans were beginning to respond to the slogan "See America First"; just when transcontinental automobile travel by ordinary people was about to start; when private organizations would boost routes with such enthralling names as "The Ocean to Ocean Highway"; when the completion of the Panama Canal would focus attention on the Pacific Coast and occasion the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego and the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco.

Already a few autoists had been allowed access to Mount Rainier, Crater Lake, and General Grant national parks, under severe local rules, but there was no uniform federal policy on the question or any assurance that cars would continue to be allowed in. The arguments over Yosemite and the ultimate decision to let the horseless bourgeois carriages into the aristocratic Sierran Troy opened a new chapter in the relations between mankind and special areas of natural beauty. The "tour-

ing craze" was to change the character of the Valley, as it was to alter the face of America.

Secretary Fisher, who opened the conference briskly and kept it moving, was aware that knowingly or not the group assembled there faced key issues of the twentieth century — issues of progress, mechanization, democracy, aesthetic values, automotive values, recreational values, and economic power. Fisher was a lean, astute Illinois lawyer, a civic-minded enemy of "gray wolves" (corrupt Chicago aldermen), a former traction counsel for Chicago, former president of the National Conservation League, a superb cross-examiner of witnesses, a nimble speaker, and a martinet of a chairman. A year before, in Yellowstone, he had presided at a conference that took up many topics, but he knew that this time the topic of obsessive proportions was the internal combustion engine.

He knew of the files of mail and the duplicate telegrams from auto partisans that had accumulated for months in the files in Washington. He knew the automobilists' standard arguments and the conservationists' replies. He said the automobiles would eventually get in, and he wanted to be down-to-earth and "talk manfashion" about the proper conditions for admitting them. Like a good administrator, rather than a good politician, he wanted constructive, specific suggestions.

Frank Flint, recently a Republican United States senator and dignified spokesman for the Automobile Club of Southern California, said that the club had 4,500 members and was the largest auto club in America. He said he spoke for the 84,700 car owners in California when he argued for prompt road-building from the southwestern park line via Inspiration Point to the floor of the Valley, and he presented surveying data and cost estimates. He argued for letting cars have an hour each way each day between Inspiration Point and the Valley, but he opposed use of cars in the Valley.

Clarence Matson of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce took the same view: "We are not going to satisfy the tourist travel — there is not a man here who is going to be satisfied to drive his machine [to the rim] and then come down the trail with a burro." Another Los Angeles man argued for opening up Yosemite as a part of California — "the playground of the United States" — before the expositions opened and drew motorists westward so that more cars would assemble in California than in any other part of the world.

John B. Curtin of Sonora, a Democratic state senator,

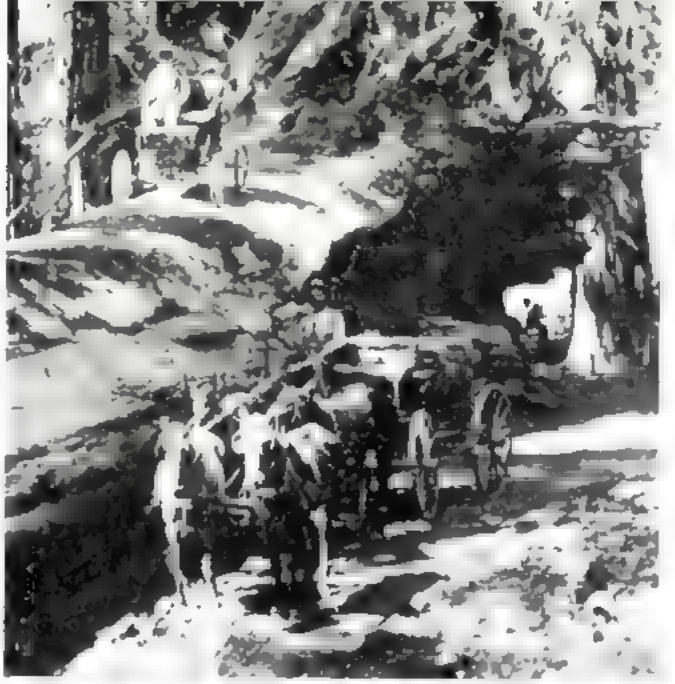
The Mariposa Grove of Big Trees, south of Yosemite Valley, was available to motorists before the Valley was, and the ride through the Wawona Tree was the one most dramatic, most specific exploit of an automobile trip to Yosemite.

one of the owners of the Big Oak Flat Road, and strictly a businessman, wanted the Valley opened up because it was one of the nation's assets to exploit. A child of nineteenth-century optimism, with rationalization if not faith or reason, Senator Curtin said:

> I am one of those people who believe in modern progress and that each condition which arises will take care of itself, and the only thing we can do is to endeavor to minimize danger in all walks of life. . . . Then go into the valley with the automobile and don't let the horse keep it out. The automobile is the new business and the horse is the old one—that is the point I want to make. . . . My friend spoke of Christ riding a jackass through Jerusalem. I do not believe he would have done it if he had had an automobile. I want to say . . . that I am one of those people who believe in modern progress.

William Colby, speaking for the Sierra Club—which was founded to save Yosemite—said of the autoists: "We hope they will be able to come in when the times comes, because we think the automobile adds a great zest to travel and we are primarily interested in the increase of travel to these parks." Secretary Fisher, who said that "a very strong sentiment exists in many quarters against having automobiles admitted to the Yosemite Valley," asked Colby if the proper time had come. "I think it is very close at hand," said Colby. He was for letting cars drive along the rim to Glacier Point and for improving the road from Inspiration Point down. He saw no harm in mixing cars and horses. The mountain roads were no different from Market Street. There were drunken drivers and accidents in both places. Captain W. W. Whitman, acting superintendent of Sequoia National Park, saw things the same way: bring in cars, bring in people, raise park income, and hasten development.

The danger created by cars on narrow wagon roads used by horses was a recurrent topic. An auto dealer from San Francisco said the Big Oak Flat was passable, both auto and horse could use it, and, besides, the car was safer than the horse-drawn vehicle. The editor of the *San Francisco Motorist* testified that he had driven down the Big Oak Flat Road as early as 1903, finding the route perfectly safe. Lieutenant Colonel William Forsyth, acting superintendent of Yosemite, emphasized that the road was no more than eight feet wide in perhaps a hundred places along four miles of precipices. "My only opposition to the automobile in this park is the safety to human life." Automobiles, motorcycles, and



That first Locomobile (July, 1900), perched atop the Fallen Monarch, Mariposa Big Trees.

In 1912 Secretary of the Interior Fisher said, "You know, there are automobilists who apparently would resent the fact that they were not allowed to run their automobiles into St. Peter's."

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1910

Studebaker Car Driven to Very Edge of Famous Overhanging Rock

Automobile Figures in Unequaled Feat in History of the Yosemite

Arthur Pillsbury Thrills Visitors in Valley by Daring Act to Obtain Unique Pho's

even bicycles scared stage teams and caused runaways and injuries.

With Colby and the aging Muir speaking up for automobiles, Colonel Forsyth and Secretary Fisher were the main spokesmen for the other side. Fisher thought the passing of stagecoaches would be sorrowful. He alluded to "a great many gentlemen who buy automobiles and who have not yet ceased to be peripatetic nuisances." Also, he said,

> We do know that some automobiles make a great deal of noise; that they emit very obnoxious odors; they drop their oil and gasoline all over the face of the earth wherever they go; that those automobiles are sold by people who regard it as a hardship to be excluded from any particular road. We know much more clearly that even machines which, as machines, have reached a high degree of perfection, are operated by gentlemen who don't know how to operate them, and are operated by other gentlemen who may know how, but don't take the necessary pains to operate them properly, and by still a third class of gentlemen who are perfectly fearless themselves and, liking the adventure, operate them in such a way as to create the impression on passers-by on foot or in a horse-drawn vehicle that it is very dangerous to be on the road at the same time.

Controversy over admitting cars to Yosemite centered around automobile operation: *in those innocent years of the second decade of this century it occurred to no one that the automobile was a producer of asphalt and a consumer of space, that it* parked *more than it rambled.*

Secretary Fisher asked Flint: "Do you think all the automobilists would be satisfied if they were allowed to go to the hotel and get out there and be allowed to pass through?" Flint answered, "Not all." He went on to argue for the docile driver, not a "speed maniac," who was willing to come and stop his car. (No one at the conference spoke of *parking* a car, either singly or in a compact group; *to park* in its later sense was not in the language.)

At the end of the conference the Secretary said, "If automobiles are to be admitted to the rim of the valley there should be a way provided by which they can leave it without having to retrace their course. That recommendation you may consider made. What we need is the funds to carry it out." This seemed to mean cars would be entering the park as far as the top edge of the Valley. No farther? And when? Boosters who wanted immediate entrance for cars were "chilled" by this meeting, as *Motor West* and *California Motor* reported, but there were constructive results. Flint's group was instructed

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THE AUSTRAMERICAN WEST

by John Greenway

To go into the Australian West is to go into the past. Yet wherever you go, however remote in distance or in time, America and its own West intrudes. A year ago I went to the edge of the Old Stone Age with a party of Australian scientists to study the water metabolism of the aboriginal natives in the hope of determining how these most primitive of people had adapted their bodies to survive in conditions of great heat and aridity. One particularly hard day, when the temperature stood at 120° in the waterbag, I sat in the red dust of Australia's dead heartland trying desperately to convince myself that I was in the same world as my university halfway around the earth. Except for the main body of natives camped near the half dozen tin-and-transite shacks of the government station twenty-five miles away, our party of seven whites and two dozen natives was the largest group of human beings in two-hundred thousand square miles of desert so barren that — as the Australians say — you could flog a flea across the plain and see him every time he jumped.

Todmorden Station, South Australia . . . the results of drought and overgrazing.

The adult natives were asleep in the sand, unmindful of the bush flies and the dust settling in their eyes and ears, but a handful of children played in our waterhole and hunted for lizards to trade for hard candy from the "lolly jar." I had recorded some of the strange mythic songs from their parents earlier in the day, and since the tape recorder was still set up, I asked the children to sing some of their songs for me. They gathered around the microphone, naked, knowing no word of English except "lolly," never having heard a radio or a record player, or seen a movie or television; yet after a moment of conspiratorial giggling, they sang out, loud and confidently: *Daby, Daby Crocka, kingada wile frontee.*

This was the second time that "Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier" had impressed upon me the fact that Australia and America had been following a parallel course of cultural evolution for nearly two centuries. Ten years earlier I had found in a more civilized part of the island continent a remarkable example of independent invention — Australian schoolchildren composing parodies of Tom Blackburn's great frontier song, just as American children were doing ten thousand miles away: *Born on a tabletop in Joe's Cafe,/Dirtiest place in the U.S.A.;/Killed his mother with a poisoned cup of tea/ And shot his pa with a .303.*

Sometimes the parallels are uncanny coincidences. While my Pitjandjarra children were singing "Daby Crocka" in the west Australian desert, American moviegoers were enjoying *The Russians Are Coming*, a comedy about the hilariously absurd behavior of a small coastal American town seized by the pretentious illusion that

a Russian naval force had selected it for invasion. At the same time, theater audiences in Adelaide, South Australia, were reliving one of the preposterous events of their history in Ralph Petersen's play, *The Night of the Ding-Dong*. Quite independently conceived, researched, and written, *The Night of the Ding-Dong* dealt in the same way with the same subject as *The Russians Are Coming*, but in Australia's case, the incident was real.

A hundred years ago an American warship slipped silently through the Heads into Sydney Harbour while the young city was asleep. In the morning the residents of Australia's tiny chief city found themselves defenseless under the guns of a foreign power. "What if I had been a hostile instead of a friend?" asked the American captain. The Sydneysiders, already frightened by the potential threat of the Russians in the Crimean War, replied to the American's question by throwing up a fantastic network of fortifications around the harbor. Every visitor who has sailed into that beautiful bay has seen the most incredible of the installations, Fort Denison, which rises out of the middle of the harbor like a great stone warship. Until the Russian scare, it used to be Pinchgut Island, the Australian Alcatraz, where the worst of the early convicts were deposited until the blazing antipodean sun had burned out their mischievousness.

Cevuna, South Australia, looking west.

Over in Adelaide, the locale of Petersen's comedy, the reaction was delayed until rumor assured the South Australians that a Russian naval squadron was indeed prowling the South Pacific. With magnificent arrogance, the defenders of Adelaide built Fort Glanville around two 20-ton cannon that could pulverize anything that might venture into their three-mile range. Fort Glanville is now buried up to its parapets by the sands of the Gulf of St. Vincent and its cannon lie in massive impotence on the roof. Nothing of the fort is visible from the beach it once protected, but it is there to be sought out by anyone who knows where to look in the weird history of America's influence on its great neighbor in the South Pacific.

Australia was invented because of America. Australia was both a discovery and an invention, but the discovery was of little importance. Many explorers found it in the two centuries before its invention, but they all ignored it in their search for something better. The invention was mothered by necessity, for one of the unpleasant consequences of the American colonists' filial tantrum of 1776 was their refusal to accept any more convict transportees from the mother country, and England had to look for some other hellhole in which to dump the criminals who had piled up in English jails and prison hulks by tens of thousands during the rebellion. Australia came to mind quickly. Its very name, "New South Wales," was a recommendation, for was not Wales the land of thieves?

From the time of its first contact by English mariners, Australia was unanimously condemned as being good for nothing; therefore it was ideal for felons. So in 1787 the Australian *Mayflower*, the "First Fleet" of eleven small ships, sailed with a cargo of convicts "totally abandoned and calloused to all sense of shame and even common decency" to establish an impudent new world. Although Australian historians have been defensive about their founding forefathers, the best that could be said for this rum lot was said by one of them in the first few weeks after the landing. "We are," he rhymed, *True patriots all; for, be it understood,/ We left our country for our country's good.*

After the establishment of the penal colony, England withdrew decorously—like an accidental mother depositing an unwanted baby on somebody else's doorstep. The first criminals sent to America in the days of Sir Walter Raleigh had vanished; 746 felons transported to Gambia in the early years of the American Revolution had disappeared; so why shouldn't the Australian transportees shuffle off in the same considerate manner? They would have done likewise, certainly, had it not been for American whalers, sealers, and other merchantmen who supplied the colony in its first two decades of struggle.

Americans continued to befriend Australians, just enough to keep the friendship strong, but never so much as to incur the perverse resentment of debtors. It helped, too, that the American interference was often displeas-

ing to the government. One of the first governors, Sir Philip Gidley King, complained to England: "I am sorry to say that if the most decided Checks are not given to the Introduction of Americans and American vessels, any benefit this Colony may possess would become the property of Americans at the expense of England."

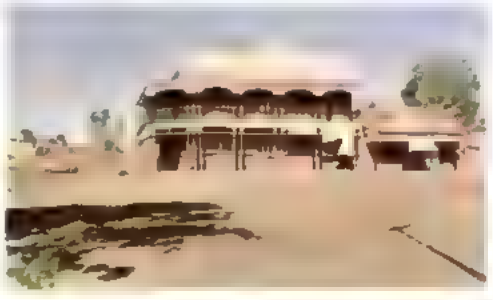
Coolgardie.

When Colonel John Glenn saw his path across the night sky blazoned by all the lights of Perth, he could not have known that one reason that western city threw up its bright welcome was the memory of what one American whaler did for their blokes in 1876.

Transportation of criminals persisted in the colony of western Australia until 1868, and in those days many of the exiles were political convicts, especially rebellious Irishmen. On Regatta Day in April of 1876, the whaler *Catalpa,* out of New Bedford, nosed into the harbor south of Perth and took off the colony's six leading Fenian prisoners. Sympathy for the Irishmen and gratitude to the Americans were enormous, as a street ballad of the time declared: *So come all you crew warders and gaolers,/Remember Perth Regatta Day;/Take care of the rest of your Fenians/Or the Yankees will steal them away!*

This historical friendship between Australians and Americans helped smooth the course of what anthropologists call "environmental determinism," which principle states that when other factors are equal, similar organisms will react to similar environments in similar ways. The history of both countries is principally the history of frontier conquest, and even when "the West" in both lands was the East, the people, and the frontier interacted to produce similar histories. Take, for example, even so small a matter as inland sailors. The first American West was opened by the Erie Canal—a great accomplishment, surely, but not one to submerge its navigators with either water or glory. Dozens of satirical songs were composed to make fun of the fresh-water sailors who manned mule-powered canalboats at the breakneck speed of four miles an hour: *Ten miles out of Syracuse/The vessel struck a shoal,/And we like to all been foundered on/A chunk of Lackawanna coal.*

The Gwalia Hotel . . . in the town where Herbert Hoover lived, 1897-1898.



Australia's only inland waterway to its west was the Murray-Darling river system, and there, too, folk expressions as independently developed as *The Russians Are Coming* and *The Night of the Ding-Dong* grew out of organism and environment. One Murray River folksong tells of the intrepid Captain Bill Jinks, who let his ship hurtle through the stormy night, heedless of his crew's pleas: *"Goodbye to our maidens, the girls we adore;/Goodbye to our friends, we shall see them no more!"/The crew shrieked with terror and the captain he swore;/We had stuck on a sandbank, so the men walked ashore.*

Gold, and far more competent mariners than Captain Bill Jinks, brought the two young countries together in a reciprocal immigration never again equaled. When gold was discovered in California in 1848, Australia received the news before some parts of the United States, because Australia was closer to California if distance is measured by time of travel. The first gold-rush vessel into San Francisco from Sydney made the run in just over two months, bringing Australian prospectors into the goldfields before many Americans had arrived from the eastern United States.

By the end of 1850 more than ten percent of Sydney's population of sixty thousand were digging in the California mines—a fact that caused great anxiety among Australian officials already worried about the precarious state of the colony. Newspapers dutifully printed rhymed admonitions: *Then pause, ye heedless voyagers, and shun the golden snare;/Oh, listen to the warning voice that cries, beware! beware!*

And the "whingers," the chronic complainers, of whom Australia has always had a world monopoly, sent back a more genuine dissuasion: *When you start*

for San Francisco/They treat you like a dog;/The victuals you're compelled to eat/Ain't fit to feed a hog.

But easy wealth attracted Australians as strongly as it had before, and soon there was a substantial colony of emigrants in San Francisco, concentrated in "Sydney Town." These were the more practical-minded of the Australians, who stayed in that booming port to ply the trade for which they were best suited—robbery—while the majority of their fellows went out to the Mother Lode to dig honestly and uncertainly for gold.

Near Musgrave Park.

Among the thousands of honest Australian prospectors was a giant of a man named Edward Hammond Hargraves. He had come to Australia in 1834 as a seaman, but decided on landing to abandon sails for sheep. While he was in Sydney in December of 1848, trying to sell his wool in a depressed market, news of the California gold strike arrived on the schooner *Plymouth*. Hargraves promptly abandoned his pastoral enterprise and bought a berth on the *Elizabeth Archer*, the first ship to land Australian goldhunters in California.

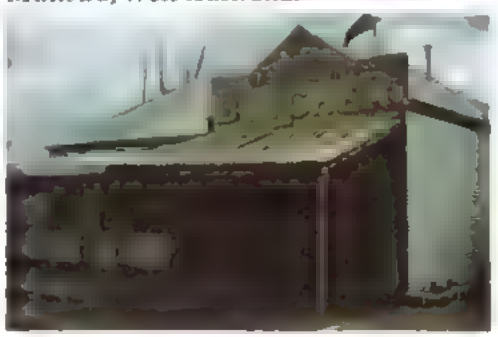
Like many men chosen by history to be great, Hargraves was a promoter rather than a producer. He found so little gold in the Mother Lode that he began complaining that there was probably more gold back in Australia. By 1850 he had convinced himself that it was true, and he returned to prove it.

Gold had been discovered many times in Australia before Hargraves set out deliberately to make the discovery. A few of the early convicts who returned with gold after a bush walk were flogged on suspicion of having melted down stolen watches. At least two of the more responsible discoverers were dissuaded from making their finds public in a colony of proved criminals. As Governor Gipps begged one clergyman who came to him with a nugget, "Put it away or we shall have our throats cut." But in 1851 the balance of population had swung finally to the more trustworthy free settlers, and officials now were worried about the exodus of Australians to California. So when Hargraves came back from Lewis Ponds Creek, twenty-one miles out of Bathurst, with about tuppence worth of gold, Governor-General Fitzroy was persuaded that he had found gold in commercial quantities. Hargraves was appointed "Crown Commissioner for Exploration of the Gold Fields," received a total of ten thousand pounds reward, and passed into history.

The rush was on immediately. An aboriginal shepherd found a nugget weighing one-hundred-forty pounds, but that was only one-tenth the size of the largest nugget dug out of the Australian earth. Within four months of Hargraves' equivocal discovery, five thousand miners were scrabbling over the Bathurst fields. In August gold was found at Ballarat in Victoria, and before the first anniversary of that discovery 100,000 miners were working the Ballarat area. The Bendigo field, only a dozen miles in diameter, was even richer. And then there were Tarrangower and Maryborough, which Mark Twain visited and described as "a railway station with a town attached."

American gold had brought Australians to California in 1849; now in 1851, Australian gold brought Americans to Victoria, where they carried on as expected. According to one popular song about the "White-Washed Yankee": *He lounged at billiard tables, tenpin alleys, and hotels,/And smoked cigars six inches long with other white-washed swells,/Or chewed his cake tobacco, and by General Jackson swore,/Expectorating on the furniture, but seldom on the floor.*

The old butcher shop at Mullewa, West Australia.



American equipment came in, too. Thousands of Australian miners worked in California shirts and California hats, dug with California shovels and sluiced gold in California cradles. And they carried California pistols in their belts, for Governor Gipps had been right all along. What George Horatio Derby had written for a California camp became immediately

applicable to the Australian gold settlements: *All night long in this sweet little village/You hear the soft note of the pistol/With the pleasant screak of the victim/Who's been shot perhaps in his gizzard.*

The authorities tried to curb what they maintained was imported lawlessness by declaring all gold the property of the Queen, forbidden to be dug by anyone who had not bought a license, and by bringing in London bobbies (called "traps") to enforce both the licensing act and a preposterous law against liquor in the goldfields. The miners' reaction was summed up in the folk song, "The Maryborough Miner": *Oh, yes, the traps have trailed me, and been frightened out of their stripes;/They never could have caught me, for they feared my cure for gripes,/And well they knew I carried it, for they had often seen/It glistening in my flipper, chaps, my patent pill machine.*

The White House Hotel—so named in honor of Herbert Hoover—at Leonola, West Australia.

Man, cattle, drought, destruction . . . two miles west of Mulga Park.

Eventually the simmering protest of the miners exploded in the only political insurrection in Australian history—an event comparable to our Boston Massacre—the Battle of the Eureka Stockade. As the Boston Massacre began with snowballs thrown at the British soldiers, the Eureka affair began in a drunken brawl outside the Eureka Hotel in Ballarat. But the incident was just the spark to the powder that had been accumulating ever since the licensing act was imposed. The miners harried the police with slogans drawn from the American Revolution and altered with an Australian twist, like "Taxation without representation is robbery!" A stockade—or, more exactly, a low barricade—was built by the diggers and manned by as many as a thousand men whenever weekends and other inducements to drink took the Australians away. Two hundred of the thousand were members of the Independent Californian Rangers' Revolver Brigade, and it was these worthies who were on sentry when the government troops attacked on the first weekend of December, 1854. Like the affray at the Alamo, the fighting was over in a few minutes, but the episode became in those few minutes an immortal part of Australian history. The flag flown by the Eureka leader, the Irish rebel Peter Lalor (whose three brothers later fought in the Civil War), became the basic design of the Australian national flag years later.

Wherever one looks in the history of the Australian West, one finds Americans and American influence. At Eureka, for instance, the first shot at the troops was fired by an American, and the first Eureka rebel to be tried for treason—and acquitted—was an American Negro, one John Joseph, who thus reincarnated Crispus Attucks of the Boston Massacre.

Americans who drove Chinese coolies from the California goldfields into clothes-washing and cooking also helped drive them out of the Australian camps into vegetable-peddling. Though the number of Chinese in the Victorian mine towns rose to thirty-four thousand in 1858, violent demonstrations against their immigration on July 4, 1854 and again on July 4, 1857, turned Australian attitudes strongly toward the White Australia policy that was espoused by all Australian political parties, even the Communist, until the Labor Party abandoned it as part of its disastrously self-destructive stand against intervention in Vietnam in 1966.

The Americans who followed the lure of gold to Australia were not all rootless and footloose. One young man who joined the latest and greatest rush, at the end of the century, became President of the United States. In 1892 two prospectors took a tomahawk and hacked out five hundred ounces of gold in one afternoon at a place on the eastern edge of the western desert that the aborigines called "Coolgardie." Five years afterward, the London mining firm of Bewick, Moreing, and Co. sent a young American engineer named Herbert Hoover to inspect their new acquisitions in the district. When Hoover arrived, he found the Coolgardie mines petering out, though his invention of the filter press,

Continued on page 75

The Geography of Hope:
Baja California

Text by Joseph Wood Krutch
Photographs by Eliot Porter

"It is a lovely and terrible wilderness, such a wilderness as Christ and the prophets went out into; harshly and beautifully colored, broken and worn until its bones are exposed, its great sky without a smudge or taint from Technocracy. . . . Save a piece of country like that intact, and it does not matter in the slightest that only a few people every year will go into it. That is precisely its value. . . . We simply need that wild country available to us, even if we never do more than drive to its edge and look in. For it can be a means of reassuring ourselves of our sanity as creatures, a part of the geography of hope."

The geography of hope, as Wallace Stegner has described it, is a rapidly diminishing resource on the American continent in an age in which hope itself becomes increasingly scarce. In one of its most recent "Exhibit Format" publications, the Sierra Club of California has produced a stunning memorial to one of the few lands left whose harshness, isolation, and beauty remains biblical amid the clutter of the twentieth century: the long peninsula of Baja California. With a pungent, reflective text compiled from the works of naturalist-philosopher Joseph Wood Krutch, and the artistry of Eliot Porter's camera, Baja California and the Geography of Hope *is a monument to a land not yet altered to man's purposes.*

THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA *meant different things to different people. To some it meant only gold and the possibility of other plunder. To others less mean-spirited it meant a wilderness which might in time become another Europe. But there were also not a few whose imaginations were most profoundly stirred by what it* was *rather than by what it might become.*

The wilderness and the idea of the wilderness is one of the permanent homes of the human spirit. Here, as many realized, had been miraculously preserved until the time when civilization could appreciate it, the richness and variety of a natural world which had disappeared unnoticed and little by little from Europe. America was a dream of something long past which had suddenly become a reality. It was what Thoreau called the great "poem" before many of its fairest pages had been ripped out and thrown away. The desire to experience that reality rather than to destroy it drew to our shores some of the best who have ever come to them.

Near Mesquital on the road to Santa Rosalia.

ALBERT EINSTEIN *once told the students at the California Institute of Technology that he doubted whether present-day Americans were any happier than the Indians who were inhabiting the continent when the white man first came. Not many are likely to agree with so extreme a statement but quite a few, I think, would admit that, leaving the Indians out of it, we are not* as much *happier than our grandfathers as it would seem our gains in health, security, comfort, convenience, as well as our release from physical pain ought to make us. Does this failure to pay off have something to do with a misjudgment concerning what man really wants most or, at least, a failure to take into account certain of the things he wants besides comfort, wealth and the rest?*

By 1980, they say, you will be broiling steaks in electronic stoves, owning a two-helicopter garage and, of course, looking at television in full color. These assurances are supposed to make it easier for the housewife to put up with mere electric ovens, ninety-mile-an-hour automobiles and soap operas in black and white. From such makeshifts they are supposed to lift sparkling eyes toward a happier future. And perhaps that is precisely what they do do. But will they be as much happier as they now think they inevitably must be? Is it really what they want? Is the lack of these things soon to come chiefly responsible for the irritations, frustrations and discontents they now feel?

Suppose they were promised instead that by 1980 the world in which they live will be less crowded, less noisy, less hurried and, even, less complicated. Suppose they were told that they will have more opportunities to see the beauties and to taste the pleasures of sea and mountain and stream, to have more contact with the wonders of trees and flowers, the abounding life of animal creatures other than human. Would the prospect look even brighter?

Pines at Laguna Hanson

WHAT PHILOSOPHERS *used to call "the good life" is difficult to define and impossible to measure. In the United States today—increasingly also in all "progressive" countries—we substitute for it "the standard of living," which is easy to measure if defined only in terms of wealth, health, comfort, and convenience. But the standard of living does not truly represent the goodness of a life unless you assume that no other goods are real.*

NO ONE *could call either the few scattered inhabitants of Baja's open country or those who inhabit La Paz, its southern metropolis, "affluent." Here is an economy, not of abundance, but of desperate scarcity, where food and water are hard to come by and manufactured goods so scarce that "use up and make do" are not a philosophy but an inescapable necessity, and most things that cannot serve their original purpose any longer are made to serve some other. No one there is likely to be able to understand what is meant by the necessity for an advertising art to "create needs" or by the dangers of "underconsumption."*

That one meets there smiling children and seemingly contented men may seem to prove that theirs is to some degree a good life. "Swept and garnished" is the phrase which sums up, not only La Paz, but all except the most forlorn of the villages. Though chickens may wander around palm-thatched huts there is no dismal accumulation of trash like that which disgraces almost every American community. In La Paz the buildings may be in need of repair but they are not frowzy—only resigned, so it seems, to the inevitable decline which a clean old man accepts. . . .

With us, advertisers solemnly congratulate themselves upon their success in "creating needs"; there, even minimal needs are hard to satisfy. There, to revert again to abstraction, is an economy of almost unqualified scarcity; here, one of almost unqualified abundance. . . .

Red lichens—near San Ignacio.

Because of that stark fact, men not only live differently and act differently; they also think and feel differently. Here we seek excuses to discard, replace, and throw away. We are a little ashamed to use up or wear out; indeed we are sometimes told that to do so is to threaten with disloyalty the very prosperity which makes it possible to have more than we need. But it will be a long time before the inhabitants of Baja are able to grasp even as an abstraction the concept of "psychological obsolescence." "Use up" and "make do" are more than merely necessary habits; they are moral injunctions.

When some physical object can no longer serve the purpose for which it was first intended there is nearly always something else for which it can be used. The automobile which has been repaired until it can be repaired no more supplies spare parts for another one not quite so far gone and, indeed, may serve with gradually reduced efficiency in one vehicle after another. Thus, "made" things return to the earth by a series of stages somewhat like those by which the body of a man, once the most complex of machines, is reduced step by step to simple inorganic chemicals, his protoplasm feeding first, perhaps, some lower animal, then some vegetable growth, then the bacteria of decay, and thus becomes successively protein, an amino acid and, at long last, merely carbon, calcium, and phosphorus again. Similarly machines, tools, and even bottles and boxes disintegrate in Baja as they serve simpler and simpler uses. The hood of a no longer usable car becomes the roof of the lean-to or part of one side of a shack; the empty soup can grows an ornamental plant; the bottom of a broken bottle outlines a flower bed; the discarded tire serves as the sole of a sandal and has become, I believe, an article of commerce.

A century ago the naturalist, Xantus, complained that he could find no boxes in which to ship his specimens because the few which turned up in Baja were quickly seized and made into furniture. Times have not changed as much as one might expect. In the wilds near a small village I saw boys digging up the camp trash we had buried in order to salvage tin cans. In La Paz itself the humbler housewives carefully avoid crushing the shells of the eggs they eat in order that these shells may be sold for an infinitesimal fraction of a cent to merchants who stuff them with confetti and then sell them again to the revelers at Mardi Gras who delight to break them finally over one another's heads.

Roadside shrine, Bahía de la Concepción.

UP TO THE PRESENT, *mankind may have profited more than it has suffered from the various powers it has been able to exercise. Let us assume that it has. But that is, at best, no more than good luck. At no moment has it ever known or, indeed, seriously considered what the consequences were likely to be. What actually happens when the steam engine or the dynamo or, for that matter, the automobile, the airplane, and the radio, is invented is simply this: Our hearts lift up and we let out a glad cry, "Hold on to your hats boys, here we go again."*

EVEN IF IT IS *assumed that more good than evil has always resulted so far, the results have certainly not all been unqualifiedly good. There was a time when the whole question of the industrial revolution hung in the balance. For a generation it enslaved children and they were freed just in the nick of time—i.e., just before child slavery could become an accepted social institution. At the present moment millions of children instead of standing in front of looms are seated in a seemingly milder enslavement before "giant twenty-one-inch screens," hypnotized by distant and usually anonymous masters who find it profitable in one way or another when certain images, sounds, and reiterated statements are presented to the eyes and ears of their victims.*

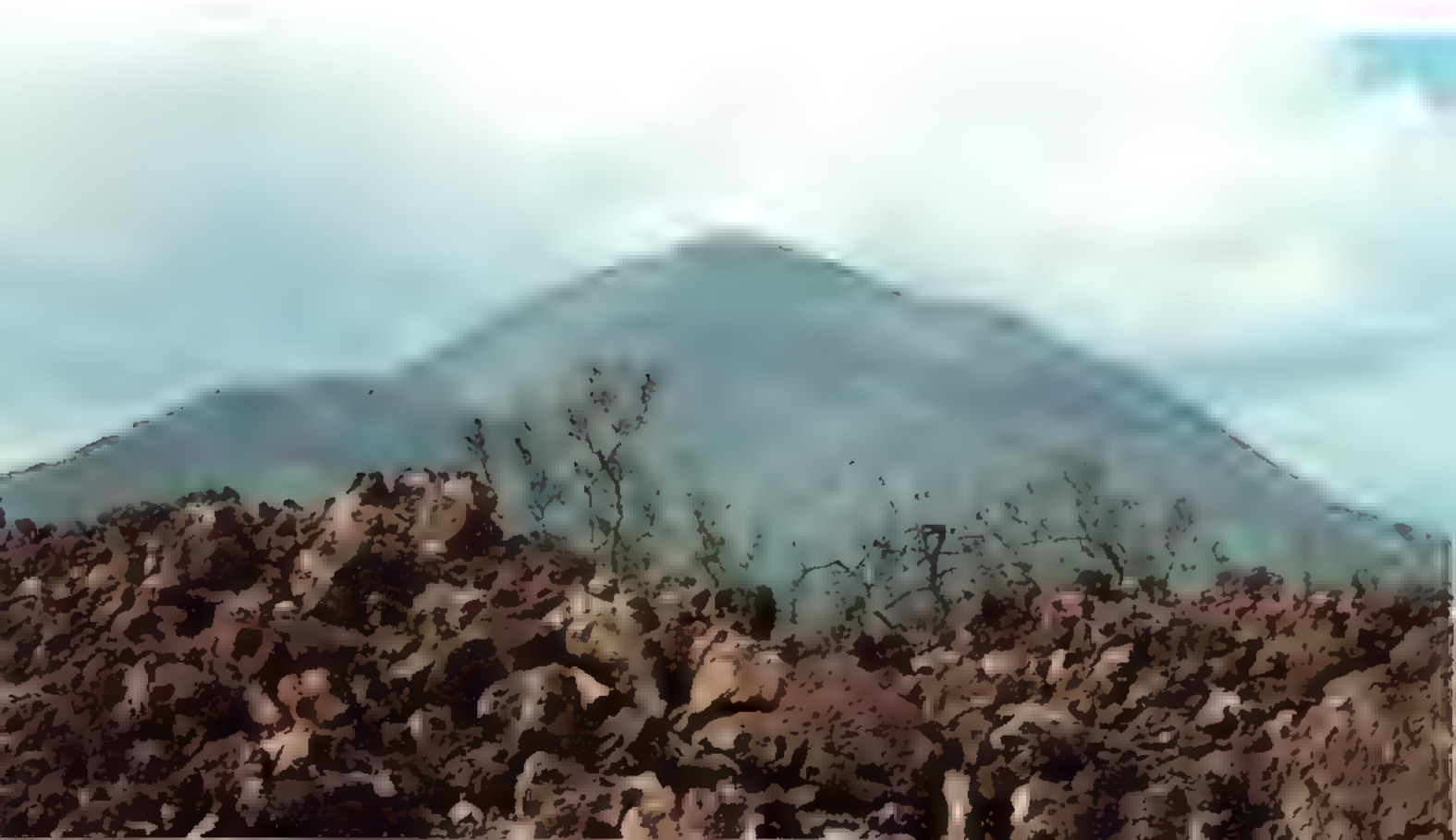
It was nothing like this which Marconi, De Forest and the rest intended. Neither was it the enslavement of children nor the creation of poisonous smog clouds that Watt intended. But all these things were among the direct consequences. Who knows how this generation of children is to be set free?

Mission San Borjas.

In the Sanskrit Panchatantra, that collection of romantic tales written down in an early century A.D., *there is a fable which might have been devised for today. Three great magicians who have been friends since boyhood have continued to admit to their fellowship a simple fellow who was also a companion of their youth. When the three set out on a journey to demonstrate to a wider world the greatness of their art they reluctantly permit their humble friend to accompany them, and before they have gone very far, they come upon a pile of bones under a tree. Upon this opportunity to practice their art they eagerly seize. "I," says the first, "can cause these dead bones to reassemble themselves into a skeleton." And at his command they do so. "I," says the second, "can clothe that skeleton with flesh." And his miracle, also, is performed. Then, "I," says the third, "can now endow the whole with life."*

At this moment the simpleton interposes. "Don't you realize," he asks, "that this is a tiger?" But the wise men are scornful. Their science is "pure"; it has no concern with such vulgar facts. "Well then," says the simpleton, "wait a moment." And he climbs a tree. A few moments later the tiger is indeed brought to life. He devours the three wise men and departs. Thereupon the simpleton comes down from his tree and goes home.

There is no more perfect parable to illustrate what happens when know-how becomes more important than common sense—and common sense is at least the beginning of wisdom. □



THE AMERICAN WEST REVIEW

THE URBAN COMMUNITY AND OUR LOST INHERITANCE

By Thomas Ryther

Did you ever see a freeway funeral? Not the tearing down and burying of a turnpike, but a procession darting down the expressway — the hearse, the funeral director's Cadillac, and one or two other cars trying to keep from being separated by the lane-changers and the tailgaters.

This macabre sight symbolizes changes that have taken place in the human community, antedating even Forest Lawn. For probably a million years human beings have depended on close, daily contact with other human beings to sustain life. Part of what we mean by "community" is the set of shared rules that allows us to feel that this contact can be depended on. The other part of community is the group itself: for any individual the sum of those others with whom he exchanges things he thinks necessary to sustain life. These exchanges include tangibles — food, clothing, shelter, labor; and they include intangibles — ritual, love, conversation, knowledge

Communities may fall anywhere along a continuum between two polar types, depending on how personal they are. At one end is the *primary community*, where an individual knows everyone with whom he shares and exchanges. At the other end is the almost totally impersonal *secondary community*. The freeway funeral is a product of the latter. In a secondary community only a few people care when a member dies; and they must travel fast and far to bury their dead, while other individuals unknowingly interfere with what was once a rite encompassing the entire community.

People who have experienced both types of community would like the best features of each. They hanker for individual usefulness and personal concern, but they also desire freedom and anonymity. Unfortunately, at this point in human history the advantages of the one are purchased at the price of the other.

American westerners are particularly sensitive to the search for the best of both types of community, for it is in this region that the most rapid shift from one type to the other has taken place. Less than one hundred years ago, the West was dominated by the subsistence community, which was almost totally primary in nature, creating little or no surplus for trade with other communities. This form gave way in rapid succession to the farm or ranch community, then to the sprawling industrial city, and finally to the even more sprawling consumption city. Many processes are still at work to alter further the nature of the western community — resource exhaustion, mobility (which enables one to live in many places simultaneously), population growth, and fear of unassimilated minority groups.

All these changes produce several human responses: rejection of minority or burdensome groups, bewilderment in an alien environment, and perhaps the most important reaction, the search for a new and more comfortable community. This search is evidenced by action, not by cogitation. Hippies congregate in San Francisco; professional people flock to conventions; whites flee to suburbs — the examples could be multiplied endlessly.

Much of our current literature, fiction and nonfiction, reflects our disagreements about community. Most of us want or need to live in or near cities, but we cannot agree on what the "community" of the city ought to be. If we could, there would be no arguments over urban renewal, open spaces, automobile traffic, education. The modern metropolis faces the perplexing — perhaps insoluble — problem of having to satisfy too many people in one place at one time.

Although there is no lack of bitterness about the urban community, we have no articulated ideology for improvement. Western Americans continue to reject one possible solution, the super community — a kind of welfare state that assumes a nationally controlled economy, a footloose population, and local areas devoid of indigenous allegiance. If there is no fresh and concentrated thinking about

(Continued on page 58)

As a City upon a Hill: The Town in American History by Page Smith *(Alfred A. Knopf, $6.95).*

Freeways by Lawrence Halprin *(Reinhold, $12.50).*

With Heritage So Rich edited by the Special Committee on Historic Preservation *(Random House, $10.00).*

COMMENTARY

By Joseph E. Illick

Our nation becomes more homogeneous with each passing year, as man-made environment triumphs over regional difference and the mass media blot out local idiosyncracies. Given this situation, there is an understandable tendency among avowed westerners to look to the past, to the time when the uniqueness of the area was undoubted. But was the West once unique? Not according to Frederick Jackson Turner, who believed that American character was formed primarily of traits indigenous to the frontier, which is to say that the homogenizing process has always been going on.

Western historians might argue either point of view, being torn between provincialism and cosmopolitanism, between a desire to show that the West was peculiar in its past and an insistence that the West contributed to the nation its most praiseworthy virtues. No doubt both views can be maintained, for both have merits. Yet provincialism always runs the risk of antiquarianism, while the cosmopolitan approach may be used so ecumenically as to become bland. History should have a healthy present-mindedness, and a pointedness as well.

However, to ask that history be *always* relevant, meaningful to the present moment, and a tool of controversy is to demand a distortion of the past. For the past is not always the present writ small, and the best historical imagination is that which can re-create another time, fundamentally different from our own.

Anyone teaching on the politically-active campuses of today recognizes the problem. Many students come to college with the idea that history is dry as dust, involving endless note-taking, facts, and dates; its relevance to the present is completely missed. It is probably an unbecoming commentary on those of us who are teachers that our academic presentations do less to alter this belief than activities outside the lecture halls. In any case, some students have conversion experiences which transform their apathy into energy, their placid acceptance of the world into righteous indignation at society's shortcomings. This has portentous meaning for the classroom. In mounting a campaign for racial justice, against the income tax, against war, for individualism — it hardly matters what — history becomes a weapon in the armory of a moral crusade. And this use of history extends beyond the campus, into our fact-oriented society. Surely we must be the first people who have produced polemical tracts with footnotes.

To steer a path between history that is simple antiquarian or bland and history that is distorted by a preoccupation with modern controversy is a difficult task. The latter pitfall is especially dangerous when dealing with twentieth-century frontiers. Yet it seems to me that in this special issue of The American West we have tried not only to achieve the necessary balance but also to bring western history into the mainstream of American issues: belles-lettres, urbanism, conservation of natural resources, even foreign policy. Perhaps this, too, is homogenization.

It is possible, of course, that there will be dissent from various opinions expressed herein. Any responsible magazine in a democratic society should encourage reader comment. We invite it and hope it will become a permanent and lively feature of The American West.

Joseph E. Illick, of the History Department of San Francisco State College, is Book Editor of The American West Review.

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THE ULTIMATE WEST

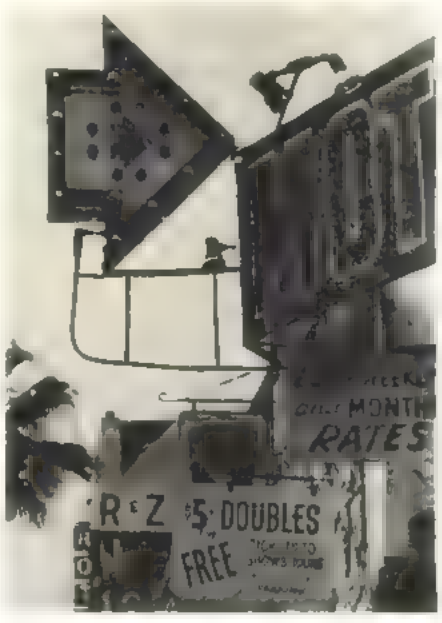
By Gunther Barth

Los Angeles: The Ultimate City by Christopher Rand *(Oxford University Press, $5.00)*

The perspective of Christopher Rand's six sketches indicates the changed role of Los Angeles in our society. What a generation ago seemed merely a much publicized paradox has come to be regarded increasingly as one of the vanguards of a new way of life. For Rand, consequently, Los Angeles "may be the ultimate city of our age." In order to substantiate this point, he describes the physical setting, discusses the citizen's mechanical addiction, and surveys the occupational structure of the community. He then probes into the region's racial make-up and analyzes its cultural and political life. The result is a fascinating and worthwhile mesh of generality and specificity. It is skillfully woven into a thesis that seeks to explain the Angeleno's state of mind as being the result of a fusion between frontier mystique and the rationale of technology, within the framework of Frederick Jackson Turner's suggestions about the effect of the frontier on the American character. This approach adds emphasis to much of the book and demands special attention.

Christopher Rand's synthesis of the Los Angeles world, by the very nature of the argument, goes beyond the realm of impression and enters the wide-open spaces of speculation. The expansion of the investigation alone, however, would not make the comments controversial. The difficulty arises when the author uses historical insights to serve conclusions not strictly related to the evidence. It taxes Turner unduly to apply his ideas to a region that from the beginning of its American experience showed so few parallels to the frontiersman and the homesteader of his famous thesis. The Mexican civilization, the American conquest, the mining and cattle industry, and large-scale agriculture were among the factors that tended to hinder the unfolding of the classic pattern in California. Even the activities of some mountain men—expectant capitalists as William H. Goetzmann has emphasized—presaged a distinctly urban trend: Benjamin D. Wilson was elected the first mayor of Los Angeles, while James W. Waters built one of the first opera houses in Southern California. Later immigrants to Los Angeles County indicate a steady shift in the place of origin: New England (1880), New York (1890), the Ohio Valley (1900), Iowa and Kansas (1910). These migrants never underwent a frontier experience in Turner's sense, but their rural backgrounds did have a significance, which Christopher Rand ignores, for the development of the automobile civilization. Because of their rural origins, the newcomers to Los Angeles readily accepted the horseless carriage as a variation of the horse-drawn carriage, in both of which the driver maintained personal control over direction and speed. In contrast to the Angelenos, urban dwellers in the East who had been removed from the farm for more than one generation still conceived of movement only in transportation systems outside of their control.

Turner's thesis, of course, provides one of those delightful texts in historical scholarship that brings to mind the great diversity of sermons that can be preached from the same Bible verse. However, recent examinations of the history of the frontier thesis have established certain facts, some of which Christopher Rand ignores in the course of his argument. In the light of Ray Allen Billington's research, it is difficult to believe that Turner's paper "created a furore" at the meeting of the American Historical Association in 1893. Frederick Merk carefully drew a line between the Manifest Destiny of the 1840's and the insular imperialism of the 1890's; it is not very likely, then, that Theodore Roosevelt was "the greatest user" of the phrase Manifest Destiny.



While these comments pertain to the application of the frontier thesis to Los Angeles, they do not necessarily involve the use of the frontier *mystique* as an analytical tool for assessing the temper of the community. Surely, the many tasks to which Turner has been put indicate that the frontier mystique operates independent of the actual experience of the land-taking. But in the case of Los Angeles it seems unwarranted to work with the mystique, whether connected with the frontier thesis or the frontier. The complexities of industrial society generated a craving for direct relationships and simple settings, an urge which an intensified urban technology has only accentuated. Fortunately, Christopher Rand illuminates some of these developments in the body of his book. This phase of his investigation supplies precious insights into the Angeleno's search for an understanding of his world as a "new kind of settlement," so unlike the village, town, or city for which his cultural heritage has prepared or accustomed him. And in these passages, if only by implication, are also found justifications, beyond simple inertia, for the continued application of the term "city" to Carey McWilliams's "rurban" (neither rural nor urban) sprawl south of the Tehachapis. □

Gunther Barth, of the History Department at the University of California, Berkeley, is the author of Bitter Strength: A History of the Chinese in the United States, 1810-1870.

MANIFEST DESTINY

By Jerald Combs

Frederick Merk, Emeritus Professor of History at Harvard University, has studied America's westward expansion for more than forty years, and in these two books he has summarized his prodigious labors. *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History* is an analysis of American popular opinion regarding expansionism. *The Oregon Question* describes the course of the Anglo-American dispute over possession of the Oregon Territory and illustrates many of the conclusions Merk reached in his earlier work on Manifest Destiny. It is a collection of articles rather than an organic work, and consequently, it suffers from repetitiveness and a lack of clear organization. But like *Manifest Destiny*, it is meticulously researched and provides the most authoritative source of information on its subject presently available

Merk is at his best when illustrating the complexities of historical events and destroying false and facile generalizations. Almost every page of these two books is devoted to performing this service for the problems of Oregon and Manifest Destiny. At only one point does Merk offer any sweeping generalizations of his own. But it is for these generalizations that he will be remembered, since they constitute his solution to a problem that lies at the basis of any study of America's westward expansion, a problem that has nagged Americans from the beginning of this nation's history: how can the United States claim to be the representative of international virtue and an opponent of aggression when this country's power, indeed its very existence, rests upon a foundation of belligerent territorial expansion?

Merk answers by saying that the American people generally opposed aggressive attempts to acquire other people's territory. He claims that the Mexican and Spanish-American wars were great aberrations of which Americans repented almost immediately. He points out that the people rejected the "54°40′ or fight" movement, forestalled the attempt by some of their leaders to take all of Mexico after the Mexican war, delayed the annexation of Hawaii, and divested the United States of its colonial possessions as soon as possible after the imperialist fling of 1899 had run its course. He says that the people may have been fooled some of the time by pugnacious expansionists such as John Quincy Adams, James K. Polk, Lewis Cass, Stephen Douglas, Alfred Thayer Mahan, Henry Cabot Lodge, and Theodore Roosevelt, but he claims that urbane internationalists like Albert Gallatin were far more representative of the generality of Americans. Like Gallatin, most Americans were disposed to compromise and were convinced that to conquer and govern territories without the consent of the inhabitants would destroy democracy. Merk even regards the frontiersman, the cutting edge of American expansion and the hero of most historians of the West, as an atypical and undesirable element of the American population. Thus he says:

> It may be safe now to venture an opinion that continentalist and imperialist doctrines were never true expressions of the national spirit. They were the very opposite. In their espousal of the "outward look" in the Mahan sense of acquiring the property of others without consultation of the wishes of the owners; in their insistence on growth, regardless of the nature and manner of the growth; and in their reliance on divine favor for procedures that were amoral, they misrepresented the nation. . . . Manifest Destiny and imperialism were traps into which the nation was led in 1846 and in 1899, and from which it extricated itself as well as it could afterward. A truer expression of the national spirit was Mission. This was present from the beginning of American history, and is present, clearly, today. It was idealistic, self-denying, hopeful of divine favor for national aspirations, though not sure of it.

The problem with Merk's thesis is that it is belied on every page of the two books he has written to illustrate it. His own work shows that the representatives of American Mission rarely opposed Manifest Destiny out of a sense of self-denial or idealism, but were motivated either by confidence that most bordering territory would come into the union of its own accord, or by a racist fear that annexation of territories having large foreign populations would pollute Anglo-Saxon democracy. These same representatives of American Mission had no compunction about using the threat of a growing American population to coerce treaties of territorial concession from owners of neighboring lands. Where treaties failed, they heartily approved of Americans' emigrating to these areas, revolting, and requesting annexation. And although Merk does not mention it, they, like most Americans, were willing to found a nation on lands taken without consent from the Indians. To distinguish those Americans who impatiently sought to take all of North America from those who more patiently sought to expand "only" to the Pacific Coast is not to divide aggressor from nonaggressor, but the more aggressive from the less aggressive. Such categories may be worthwhile, but they do not eliminate the fact that the United States, like most other nations, was founded upon land acquired by force. □

Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History by Frederick Merk *(Vintage Press, $1.95)*

The Oregon Question: Essays in Anglo-American Diplomacy & Politics by Frederick Merk *(Harvard University Press, $7.95)*

Jerald Combs, Assistant Professor of History at San Francisco State College, is presently completing a study of the foreign policies of Jefferson, Madison, and Hamilton

DAVID COIT IN EL DORADO

By Ferol Egan

Digging for Gold without a Shovel: The Letters of Daniel Wadsworth Coit from Mexico City to San Francisco 1848-1851, edited by George P. Hammond *(Old West Publishing Company, Denver; $22.50.)*

In a time of forced retirements, housing developments for people over fifty, and much public nonsense about the loss of creative power once a person has passed the magic age of thirty, *Digging for Gold without a Shovel* is extremely refreshing to read. Once again, George P. Hammond, Director Emeritus of the Bancroft Library, has done a sensitive and scholarly editing of what must be a classic of gold rush literature. To prove further the fallacy of such terms as "senior citizen," Hammond has given shape and continuity to the letters and drawings of Daniel Wadsworth Coit, who was sixty-one years old when he headed for Mexico City in 1848.

As a business representative of Howland and Aspinwall, Coit arrived in Mexico at the close of the Mexican War. He saw the last weeks of American occupation and watched the departure of the troops. Then he waited for the result of the struggle between General Paredes' revolutionary forces and the Mexican government. When the revolution failed, Coit settled down to the routine of business.

Coit was a keen observer with both words and sketches. He wrote of the beauty of Mexico City and the surrounding country; he sketched superbly "The Great Plaza and the Cathedral" and the rancho of a friend; he described the dangers of travel on Mexican roads rampant with bands of robbers; and he wrote that he had met Lieutenant Edward Fitzgerald Beale as Beale passed through Mexico with official news of the discovery of gold in California. This last event changed Coit's plan to return home after he had completed his business affairs. As he wrote to his wife, "I have the prospect of going to California, the 'El Dorado' of the present times, on business of pecuniary advantages and which, I think, it would be wrong for me to decline."

This business venture involved the exchange of silver and gold coins for gold dust. As Coit wrote, ". . . gold dust . . . has become so abundant in that country, owing to its easy acquisition, that the price, as compared with dollars or coin of any kind, is exceedingly low." But while he made a good sum of money out of this business, the most valuable result of his California adventure came through his letters and drawings. His descriptions of the journey to California, of early San Francisco and Benicia rank right alongside the very best historical documents of the period.

Over and above his reports on such items as the cost of living, early churches, the first San Francisco fires, and the speculation on Benicia as the "coming" seaport, Coit's observations of how individuals reacted to events make his letters first-rate social history. A good example is the following description of a prostitute's reaction to the destruction of her house in a San Francisco fire:

> The house had been furnished at great cost with the richest description of bedroom and drawing-room furniture, and here it lay, thrown on the ground in one promiscuous heap — French bedsteads, mirrors, carpets, silk curtains, hangings, toilet furniture, rich female apparel. . . . On one side and occasionally moving about with perfect composure and affected dignity, the proprietor of all this rich furniture — a tall, showy woman, not very youthful or very pretty, but yet in a full rich plain black satin dress with the light shining strongly upon her, a very striking object at the moment. It was not many minutes before the sparks and burning shingles or pieces of them began to shower down upon the rich furniture and trappings. When they were roughly removed to a greater distance by the crowd, something in this new movement suddenly disturbed the equanimity of the frail lady. The mock dignity was lost sight of and the cauldron of rage, which was boiling but stifled within, burst forth and vented itself upon a most inoffensive glass chandelier, which was kicked and trampled to pieces in a moment.

Writing such as Coit's is rare in any period of history, and equally rare are sketches such as his that capture the look of the time. Fortunately both are available in *Digging for Gold without a Shovel*. Unfortunately, though, this rare glimpse of gold rush history has been printed in an expensive, limited edition. For the flush collector this is all right, but it is a shame that a cheaper edition was not issued at the same time. After all, history should not be relegated to the position of a high-priced commodity in the marketplace. □

Ferol Egan is author of The Eldorado Trail, *forthcoming in McGraw-Hill's "American Trails" series.*

A Coit sketch of a Mexico City street scene, 1848.

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A WESTERN GATHERING

Full bibliographic information (number of pages, where published, etc.) for all books reviewed can be obtained from the listing under Current Western Books, page 62

The Pioneer in the American Novel, 1900-1950 by Nicholas J. Karolides *(University of Oklahoma Press, 1967)*

BY THOMAS WENDEL

EVER SINCE PUBLICATION of Henry Nash Smith's *Virgin Land* seventeen years ago, literary criticism has assiduously sought for the meaning of the myth and the symbol evoked by the West. Not only has "the West as a state of mind" maintained its hold upon many American writers, but the West as a geographic entity has maintained its popularity as the archetypical setting for the American story. In a sense, with *The Pioneer in the American Novel, 1900-1950*, Nicholas Karolides carries Smith's analysis into the twentieth century.

Just as Smith examined the characters of what he called "the sons of Leatherstocking," so Karolides analyzes the characters of *their* sons. The remarkable outcome of Karolides' analysis is the continuity between these generations. Literary styles change, but in every essential respect the pioneer remains true to James Fenimore Cooper's creation.

This may be Karolides' most pertinent insight. The frontier novel has become in our time a vehicle of social conservatism. Nostalgia can easily invoke reaction. The tough individualism of the pioneer hero is of itself a commentary upon the welfare state. If Leatherstocking at times belied his creator's conservatism, his descendants in an urban age vindicate it. In them, the past comments on the present and finds it wanting. The pioneer is the American Adam, calling us back, to use Smith's term, to "the garden of the world" from which we have irrevocably wandered.

Karolides' book presents an analysis of the pioneer as he appears in more than one hundred twentieth-century novels of the West. The physical characteristics of the hero are described, together with his "role and character" and "moral fiber." There are also chapters on the western heroine, "class on the frontier," the Indian, the frontier work-ethic, law, and the frontier spirit. In the book's conclusion, the image of the pioneer is related to the changing literary styles of the past half-century.

Subtle variations in the characterization of the pioneer throughout this period are far less significant than the constants. In more recent novels the "photographic detail of muscularity" is emphasized, the hero evinces a less aristocratic bent, the Indian is viewed in fuller perspective, and there is greater complexity of motivation. Nevertheless, the "neoromantic" western hero of the contemporary novel is a recognizable kinsman of his progenitors. From the works of Owen Wister to those of A. B. Guthrie, the pioneers depicted in literature share the virtues of courage, determination, resourcefulness, dependability, trustworthiness, and loyalty. The essential image of the pioneer stands curiously invulnerable to the eroding effects of time and history.

This is the point that Karolides fails to expand. The challenge posed in the Preface is never met: "An analysis of the conception of the pioneer," writes Karolides, "will aid in comprehending how Americans see their past and how they see themselves in relation to their heritage of a way of life and a national character." This may be, but Karolides gives us no such analysis. We are left to draw our own conclusions, and on the evidence of the one-hundred-plus novels, the implications concerning our "national character" cannot be altogether flattering. Does the persistence of the pioneer image mean that the American by 1950 was not yet ready to enter the twentieth century? Or does the development of a "social consciousness" in some of the more recent heroes imply a relaxation in the code of ruthless individualism? One wishes that Karolides had come to grips with such issues.

One conclusion we might draw is that the pioneer image had not retained its charm for the more serious American novelists. It is significant that almost none of the major novelists of the twentieth century has contributed to the western genre. Of the many writers discussed, only Willa Cather and Ole E. Rolvaag, with perhaps one or two others, truly have stood the test of time.

A further explanation is suggested by Edwin Fussell, who has remarked in his recent book, *Frontier*, that the American frontier was closed long before the Superintendent of the Census announced the fact in 1890. Consequently, its literary penetration, like its physical exploration, has lost the dynamism of discovery. Unlike Karolides, who does the usual obeisance to Frederick Jackson Turner, Fussell believes that Turner was an anachronism with his "astonishing confusion of cultural regression and 'Americanization'." It was all over well before 1890 in spite of Turner "and the countless American historians bubbling in his wake." We might ask, in paraphrase of Fussell, how many twentieth century novelists are mere "bubbles" in Cooper's wake? How many novels examined by Karolides exemplify "the twentieth century sentimental-antiquarian West-mongering," so designated by Fussell?

Karolides has done a superlative job in analyzing the many-faceted character of the pioneer as he has recently appeared in the modern novel, but we are left with an impression that he has exhaustively displayed the obvious. □

Thomas Wendel is Assistant Professor of History at San Jose State College.

The Creek Frontier, 1540-1783 by David Corkran *(University of Oklahoma Press, $5.95)*

By Wilbur R. Jacobs

On the southwestern flank of the southern colonies was the Creek Indian country, a wide area encompassing portions of what is now western Georgia and central parts of Alabama and Mississippi.

The Creeks, of the Muskhogean linguistic family that also included the Choctaw and Chickasaw, had gradually united through ties of language, regional meetings of village chiefs, and clan intermarriage to form a confederacy of some sixty towns. Near the end of the colonial period their confederacy was a powerful military force, capable of mustering some two thousand fighting men.

The story of the rise and fall of the Creek confederacy is part of the larger story of the Indian frontier in early American history. Major Indian confederacies, including the Iroquois, Cherokee, and Creeks, were able to hold their own as a kind of balance of power during the imperial struggle between France and England in North America. But after the Seven Years' War, from 1756 to 1763, the Indians became increasingly dependent upon England for protection against encroachment upon their lands by provincials. As Corkran points out, the Creeks joined the wrong side at the time of the Revolution, and were left at the mercy of the victorious Americans. Although Washington and his war secretary, Henry Knox, made an effort to protect the natives from complete exploitation, the story of the dispossession of the natives in our early national period is a sad one. The Creeks, though not immediately adjacent to the expanding colonial frontier, were eventually the victims of a relentless foe who had an insatiable appetite for fertile lands

David Corkran's narrative covers

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some three hundred years of Creek warfare and diplomacy involving Spaniards, French, English, and Americans, and intermittent feuds with neighboring Cherokee and Choctaw. He details scores of episodes involving assault, ambush, and massacre; at the same time, there are many scenes of Indian hospitality and generosity. The friendly actions of chief Tomochichi of the Yamacraw Creeks, for example, made it possible for James Oglethorpe to lead a peaceful invasion of settlers into Georgia. Corkran concludes that the Creek headmen were shrewd diplomats who defended what they conceived to be the national interests of their people, but when war came, proud Creeks with fluttering trophies and painted war sticks were no match for the white men who invaded their ancestral lands.

Here, then, is a narrative illuminating an era that passed quickly from the mainstream of our history.

Corkran has examined a large mass of manuscripts and printed materials to give us an accurate account of the main events of Creek history during the colonial era. □

Wilbur R Jacobs is Professor of History at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

The Rock Art of Texas Indians, by Forest Kirkland and W. W. Newcomb, Jr. *(University of Texas Press, $12.50)*

BY GUILLERMO ZELAYA

The Rock Art of Texas Indians offers a view of the cultures of the early nomadic inhabitants of the semidesert regions in Texas. Newcomb's descriptive and analytical text is thorough and reliable as a study in general anthropology. Combined with the elaborate watercolors of Kirkland, it focuses clearly upon the cultural traits of the Indians. Most interesting is the development of, and variations in, the representation of the Pecos River-style shamans; their association with anthropomorphic and animal figures; their variation from crudely symbolic to almost realistic representation, and then to extremely sophisticated abstract forms; and the explanations for labeling them "shamans" rather than "deities." Also fascinating is the evaluation of the influences of Spanish culture, Christianity in particular.

The book suffers several shortcomings, however. Various interpretations of the drawings form the total evidence for Newcomb's conclusions; no attempt is made to refine the analysis by reference to other sources of cultural information, such as artifact remains. Furthermore, the author's attempt at integrating art with anthropology falls short because of the lack of aesthetic evaluations. The reader cannot help but yearn for comparative analysis of these distinctly unique rock art symbols with those of other ethnic groups, even though it would be a difficult aesthetic comparison for several reasons. Such drawings as the Pecos River style, although elaborate and sophisticated, seem to have evolved indigenously, and the lack of outside influences restricts aesthetic comparison. The Puebloan pictographs also defy elaborate explanation because they do not show any stylistic development.

As a result of self-imposed restrictions, Newcomb's interpretations become listings of multiple possibilities of explanations. This aversion to value judgments may make for good anthropology, but it prevents the work from being vibrant art criticism. Perhaps because of this fault, the reader is left with an impression of these people that is as stiff and static as the art they created. □

Across the Olympic Mountains: The Press Expedition, 1889-90 by Robert L. Wood *(The Mountaineers and the University of Washington Press, Seattle, $5.95)*

In December of 1889, six men, four dogs, and two mules set out on a six-month exploration of one of the few remaining unplumbed wilderness areas in the United States: the Olympic Peninsula, a wild tangle of rain forests and mountains that covered an area of more than six thousand square miles. The Press Expedition (a local affair sponsored by the Seattle *Press)* certainly lacked the sweeping importance of earlier explorations of the untracked West, but it was not deficient in single-minded determination and that strong-jawed conviction peculiar to men who climb mountains. Nor did it lack the elements of humor, as Robert L. Wood —himself a mountaineer and former editor of the *Mountaineer Bulletin*— makes clear in his studied re-creation of the expedition's tribulations as it struggled manfully across the mountains from

the Straits of Juan de Fuca to the mouth of the Quinault River on the Pacific Ocean.

Print in a Wild Land by John Myers Myers *(Doubleday, $5.95)*

Fortunately, the author limits his intent in this antic discussion of western journalism. As a result, the reader is somewhat prepared for the absence of any especially perceptive evaluations, and can sit back and enjoy, with the author himself, some lively wit, rollicking vituperation, and editorial high jinks and low jinks. Myers's eye for the genuinely colorful can hardly be questioned, and his own prose, in spite of its occasional affectation, generally serves as a fitting accompaniment to his calculated selections of exercises in frontier journalism.

One problem does present itself, however — the implication, if not the stated claim, that the tactics and tantrums of western journalism were somehow unique. The journalistic patterns of the West were imported, not invented, and if the rambunctious western towns provided a peculiarly receptive audience to free-wheeling prose, it was related in kind to the glory days of New York City's daily press.

Too Far North . . . Too Far South by Odie B. Faulk *(Westernlore Press, $7.50)*

This detailed and comprehensive little study offers an intriguing view into the strange half-world of negotiations between Mexico and the United States following the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. One task left undone by the vigorous bloodletting of the Mexican War was the establishment of a mutually agreeable boundary between the two countries from El Paso del Norte to the Pacific Coast; to this end a boundary commission was set up by the terms of the treaty, and surveying parties ventured to fix the international line, beginning in 1849. This apparently simple job was ultimately so hampered on both sides by political bungling, chicanery, contention, and boondoggling that it took four years to complete the survey — and it was not until 1854, with the ratification of the Gadsden Purchase, but the question finally was settled.

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Text by Stephen C. Jett,
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Navajo Wildlands, the 14th in the famed Sierra Club Exhibit Format Series, is designed as were its predecessors to let people know the mood and the feel of America's special places, the eons it took to perfect them, and the endless time it would take to begin to restore them were we ever to spoil them. Philip Hyde's camera captures as brilliantly as any camera could the special beauty of Navajo country in 72 full color photographs. As with all Sierra Club Exhibit Format Series, no expense has been spared in reproducing these photographs on large pages of Kromekote paper lithographed with superb color fidelity by Barnes Press.

In describing this new book, Editor Kenneth Brower says, "Stephen Jett's part of the text is good description of country he knows as well as anyone. In relying heavily on Willa Cather, who wrote the very best prose on the Southwest, and on Oliver La Farge, we do something we've never done before—draw a lot from novels: *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, *The Professor's House*, and *Song of the Lark* by Cather; *Raw Material*, *Laughing Boy*, and *Enemy Gods* by La Farge. I think this gives the book dimensions our books haven't had before, putting you in the middle of the country, surrounding you with it as a novel can best, and, along with the Navajo chants, transmitting the feel of the country more palpably than most of our books have transmitted the feel of their terrain."

Navajo Wildlands "as long as the rivers shall run," 10½ x 13½ inches. $25

Baja California

and the Geography of Hope

Photographs by Eliot Porter.
Text by Joseph Wood Krutch.

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Joseph Wood Krutch in his Introduction

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North to Yesterday a novel by Robert Flynn *(Alfred A. Knopf, $5.95)*

It would be a bit too much to call this often humorous, compelling novel the western counterpart of Chaucer's narrative of a trek to Canterbury. Still, this *is* the rendering of a pilgrimage, the story of a group of men and one girl driving a herd of "ragged, thin-flanked, hump-shouldered, sway-backed" longhorns from the brush country of Texas up to Trail's End — a town that exists only in memory, for the cattle, the men, and the drive itself are misplaced in time, hamstrung by progress. Their pilgrimage takes place long after the era of the cattle boom, in a time when six-guns were looked upon with queasy suspicion and cows were something to be milked, not driven. Despite an unfortunate tendency to overwork his dialogue (which is sometimes sidesplittingly funny), the author has managed to produce an eminently readable fable.

Grizzly Country by Andy Russell *(Alfred A. Knopf, $6.95)*

Running a meandering gamut from scientific precision to anecdote, this loose but frequently charming interpretation probably tells as much as most people will ever need to know about the grizzly bear — his history, his ecology, his habits, and his massive personality flaws. Andy Russell, a naturalist-photographer with wide experience along the lines of grizzly-watching, evidences throughout an imperishable fondness for the great beast — an affection only slightly tempered by several personal encounters.

SUPERLATIVES

Centenarians — Most remarkable, Thomas Parr, died in 1635 at the age of 152 after a dinner party by Lord Arundel, who was 95; Countess of Desmond killed in her 146th year by falling from a cherry tree; John Riva died at 116, leaving a son of 14.

Family — Mrs. Jas. McElmore, of Texarkana, Ark., triplets in 1888, 9 children in 3 years all living.

THE URBAN COMMUNITY

(Continued from page 49)

alternatives, the community of the future will probably emerge blindly out of the casual interaction of the materialism, speed, machinery, hedonism, profit-making, and baby-producing of the present.

Fortunately, the discussion of new styles of community can go on at several levels, often without our being aware that it is contributing to solution of the problem. To provide a sound basis for a new philosophy of community, at least three questions need to be answered: What really *was* the community of our past, its strengths and weaknesses, and why did it change? What is the nature of today's community? What are other possibilities for the future if we reject the super-community concept?

Three recent books illustrate the different levels of discussion of the problem and deal, in one way or another, with the three key questions. Page Smith's *As a City upon a Hill: The Town in American History* (Alfred A. Knopf, $6 95) shows us why some small towns were more successful than others as primary communities. *Freeways,* by Lawrence Halprin (Reinhold, $12.50), although not intended as a commentary on community, reveals the bankruptcy of a special facet of contemporary community planning. *With Heritage So Rich,* edited by the Special Committee on Historic Preservation (Random House, $10.00), hints at why it might be important for future communities to preserve architectural mementos of their predecessors. Each book adds to our understanding of the past, present, and future of the western community.

Smith's book is a landmark. His central idea is that in the Westward Movement there were important differences between "covenanted" communities and "cumulative" communities, and that the life histories of small towns were very much affected by the nature of their origin. Covenanted communities were offshoots or splinters of New England churches, plus a smattering of utopian groups. They took their form from a conscious agreement to create a social unit, or primary community, usually around the formal structure of the church. The consequences of the covenant included: a more stable social

bond, hence less tyranny over the town by far-off railroad and manufacturing empires; provision of a symbolic meaning for the daily task of living with one's fellows; strong emphasis on education; and a redemptive rather than a punitive attitude toward social deviance.

Eventually both covenanted and cumulative communities were caught up in the speculative boosterism of post-Civil War America. Generation after generation of business failure or marginal success sapped the vitality of most small towns, although the covenanted communities were slightly more successful in developing enterprises of an educational or business nature that gave the community longer-lasting stability. Recent detailed studies corroborate Smith's picture of the gradual failure of the isolated town and its likely disappearance as a self-sustaining social unit. (See *Trans-Action*, April 1967, pages 42-51.) Yet out of the covenanted community emerged our nostalgia for, and almost mystical appreciation of, a certain type of primary community — a development that Smith documents very well in his chapter on the town in American literature. His book is a skilled and lucid treatment of the complex flow of cultural, political, economic, and ideological processes that create and destroy community.

Lawrence Halprin, outspoken San Francisco architect and environmental planner, has given us a definitive treatment of the problem of freeways in a text supplemented by photographs and drawings that illustrate varieties of freeway by location, aesthetics, function, and relationship to surrounding streets and buildings. Halprin wishes to present the freeway as both art form and integrative tool. As art, it can be pleasing in itself, it can give the participant striking new vistas of the city and new motion experiences. As integrative tool, he argues, the freeway can give form to the city as "a great functioning whole — a theater for events to happen and for the most evocative and creative involvements to occur."

Although Halprin evidently did not intend to be specific about what styles of community are to be preferred, his failure to do so is typical of the city- and environmental-planning movement. The fault lies not with the planners themselves. They have tried to develop an ideology of community planning with little or no help from philosophers, politicians, and others who should be serious students of community, few of whom have even bothered to criticize the nonsense that consequently passes for a planning ideology. In practice, the persons who make decisions that actually affect communities simply ignore plans and planners. Halprin is more candid than most artist-planners about the complexity of values that clash in a city planning effort. But he errs in writing as if planning could at present be done on the basis of humane and human considerations and needs, rather than on the basis of economic power. The current planning problem is not simply one of resolving value conflicts. Too often there is no resolution, no compromise, because many human values — usually these of the least powerful — get blasted completely out of existence. Planners might better be figuring out how to get us past that stage in social development in which economic power means life or death to the community. Only then can values other than economic figure importantly in the art of planning.

With Heritage So Rich — a book beautifully illustrated with photographs of row houses, mansions, churches, public buildings, railroad depots, bridges, office buildings, barns, and schools — deals with the place of architecture in American history. It stresses the importance of maintaining "windows on the past" and explores the problems of preserving aging structures in a dynamic and profit-oriented society, comparing European and American efforts at preservation

The book is both a successful polemic and a visual treasure. One of its themes is that age alone does not mark a structure worthy to be saved. A combination of aesthetics, usefulness, and integration with surroundings is the criterion. Because beauty to one person may be monstrosity to another, usefulness may be the better guide to preservation. Scattered comments from the twelve essays comprising the text yield a hypothesis: the building that symbolizes a continuing goal, need, activity, or value to a nontransient group of people will preserve itself. It will not be torn down before it is worn out. Carl Feiss's essay, "Our Lost Inheritance," set me to thinking about expanding the hypothesis. He notes, "The losses in the ghost towns of the Rockies have been surprisingly recouped in recent years," and he goes on to mention Central City and Georgetown, both Colorado towns with which I am familiar. What these and other preserved places (streets in Greenwich Village, the North End in Boston, "Old Town" in Albuquerque, Mormon villages in Utah) have in common is some continuing type of activity drawing people to the place. It is the activity that makes people want to preserve and restore things associated with it. The reverse is not true. That is, preservation does not in itself create activity.

There seems to be a curious lesson to be learned. When we create communities more or less oriented around the activities that held primary communities together in the past, we will also create the desire to preserve the symbols of the heritage of these older communities. Without some sense of community, of *activity in common*, of shared pursuits that have a history, there can be no successful preservation or restoration. Hopefully these "preserving" communities, where the past is selectively represented in the present by specific activities, reflect a renaissance of experiments in community. They may then serve as bridges toward, or models for, new types of community, more compatible with an automated, affluent society. And since no one knows what is the best community (at least for himself) until he sees it in action, they may serve as natural experiments to which we ought to pay close attention. Perhaps they can blend old western diversity with a new western tolerance and ease of ingress and egress — the diversity of Taos and Chinatown, of Window Rock and the Haight-Ashbury, of Newport Beach and Watts, of Aspen and Oraibi. □

Thomas Rythor, a sociologist, is currently Research Associate, Department of Pediatrics, Stanford Medical Center.

GEMS OF WISDOM

Never be ashamed of confessing your ignorance; for the wisest man upon earth is ignorant of many things, inasmuch as that which he knows is a mere nothing in comparison with what he does not know

— *Anonymous*

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LOOKING WESTWARD

Joseph E. Illick's special columnist for this issue is
HELEN HOSMER

IN MANY RESPECTS, the twentieth-century frontier has been a stage for the last act in a long narrative of problem-solving. This century has seen the last barrier to western transportation, commerce, and communication removed with the astounding evolution of the automobile; it has seen a wilderness overcome by cities; it has seen an immense population shift that finally has assured the West of its place in the arenas of political influence; it has seen a corresponding shift in the uses and accumulation of wealth, of cultural influence and power. An unfortunate corollary in this evolution, of course, has been the creation of new problems whose complexity still confounds us. Paradoxically, however, one of the single most important unsolved problems the West faces today is one that is not new, one whose roots lie deep in its history, one that it has had all the time in the world to resolve: the question of water — its ownership, use, availability, quantity, and pollution. Questions that have caused range wars are still with us. There is some indication that they always will be.

In the opening days of the Ninetieth Congress, Senator Birch E. Bayh of Indiana introduced into the record a speech by Congressman J. Edward Roush (Indiana) before the Great Lakes Commission, in which he discussed the Federal Water Pollution Act of 1966 and how to implement it into a meaningful action program. It sounded promising.

On February 21, 1967, Senator Ernest Gruening (Alaska) introduced into the record an article by Senator Gaylord Nelson (Wisconsin) published in the *Progressive:* "The National Water Pollution Scandal." It sounded both terrifying and critically urgent.

On June 22, 1967, during a heated debate in the House on appropriations for refunding NASA's space program with nearly five billion dollars, the Hon. Rogers C. Morton (Maryland) raised the question of urgent national priorities. Mr. Morton pointed out that "89 percent of all federal spending has been absorbed by our military requirements . . . interest on our debt . . . and other fixed charges. This leaves only eleven cents out of each dollar for all other federal programs not funded through special trust funds, user fees, and the like. The nearly five-billion-dollar authorization for our space program means that one-fourth of all the money [left] . . . is being absorbed by our efforts in space." Morton listed high among other priorities, "overcoming the sins of the past in cleaning up our lakes, streams, bays, and even our oceans."

A National Water Commission bill finally passed both houses. Composed of a seven-man board to be appointed by President Johnson (without the need for Senate ratification), and given a fat budget, such a commission would appear to be at least one step in the right direction; yet whether it becomes just another pork barrel or an effective working organization depends almost entirely on the kind and quality of Johnson's appointees

That congressional and federal action has been ponderous at best, in the face of what is rapidly approaching a point of emergency, is a particularly hard fact for concerned westerners to contemplate — mainly because regional action has not often proved more effective. The present pollution debacle facing Lake Tahoe, for example, has been met with a singularly fumbling attempt between the legislatures and governors of the states of Nevada and California to create a regional control commission; from the beginning, the attempt has been bogged down in a welter of political, fiscal, and ideological considerations bearing only peripheral relevance to the real problem. By the time all these entanglements are worked out — if ever — and a truly functional organization is established, it may well be too late, for the point of no return in regard to Lake Tahoe is very likely not a matter of years, but of months.

Such regional difficulties *can* be overcome, a fact demonstrated in **The Big**

Water Fight *(Stephan Green Press, 1966, $6.95)* by the Education Fund of the League of Women Voters. This organization, with admirable pluck, decided in the spring of 1966 to retain water resources as a major field of study and action. Through education, pressure, a never-say-die determination, and an abiding faith in the democratic process at a grass-roots level, the League has since managed to push through such programs as Seattle's Metro Action Committee (calling for construction costs of nearly 125 million dollars a year over a ten-year period), has succeeded in removing sewage and sewage effluent from Lake Washington, and has cleaned up all that state's salt-water beaches except those of Elliott Bay. Their Washington efforts have been matched elsewhere in an astonishing string of successes, explained in part by an effective offensive strategy. get the facts, share the facts with appropriate officials within the local power structure, mobilize support, press for appropriations, and follow through.

An excellent idea of the political and ideological obstacles encountered by the League of Women Voters in their struggles (together with almost all other aspects of the question of water pollution and pollution control) can be obtained from a close reading of the articles collected in George Nikolaieff's **The Water Crisis** *(H. W. Wilson, $3.00)*. This authoritative compilation, like all the volumes in H. W. Wilson's "Reference Shelf" series, is an indispensable source book for writers and researchers on the subject, and while the book as a whole is not concerned primarily with the water problems of the West, there is little in it that is not at least indirectly relevant, from William Bowen's "Water Shortage Is a Frame of Mind," to Fred J. Cook's "A River Dies—and Is Born Again."

Water: the Vital Essence *(Harper & Row, $5.95)* by Peter Briggs is somewhat less valuable to a detailed understanding of western water problems; his discussions of water shortage and pollution considerations tend toward brevity and summation. It is entirely possible for the reader to forget momentarily Lake Tahoe *et al.*, while becoming engrossed in the legitimately exciting new discoveries being made in oceanography and the drama of manned submersibles, in the story of dolphins and their uses for man, in archeology and treasure-hunting in deep waters, in antarctic studies and the uses of nuclear power in connection with the desalinization of ocean water and in the replacement of hydroelectric dams by self-powered generators. Ironically, what Briggs does not discuss is the clear and present danger being presented by those very technological advances; since no completely safe means of disposing of nuclear wastes has yet been devised, we are faced with a potential form of water pollution more terrifying than all the rest combined.

In spite of sporadic success in regional control, in spite of the belated formation of a National Water Commission and a growing awareness of the causes and effects of water pollution, there is little room for complacency. A sluggish Ninetieth Congress, hamstrung by a string of "priority" problems that would gag a computer, is not likely to come up with any sort of vigorous legislation. And, as Senator Frank Moss (of Utah) warns in his knowledgeable study, **The Water Crisis** *(Praeger, $5.95)*, we cannot afford to wait. In view of his position as chairman of the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, it may be assumed that the Senator's conclusions are worth a moment's thought: "America has run out of time in which to repair its water resources. Each day's delay adds to the cost, but cost is not the issue. The future of every American depends on water regardless of his income, profession, or station in life. No society can build material prosperity or spiritual health on the ruin of its physical environment."

Helen Hosmer, whose "Imperial Valley" appeared in the Winter, 1966, issue of THE AMERICAN WEST, *is an authority on water use in the West.*

SUPERLATIVES

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CURRENT WESTERN BOOKS

† *Reviewed in this issue*

‡ *Received up to November 15*

* *Advertisement* — *Page*

Across the Olympic Mountains: The Press Expedition, 1889-90 *(The Mountaineers and the University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1967, 220 pp., illus., biblio., appen., $5.95)* by Robert L. Wood †56

The Alaska Railroad *(Frederick A. Praeger, N.Y., 1967, 326 pp., illus., biblio., appen., index, $5.95).* by Edwin M. Fitch ‡

The American West: A Reorientation *(University of Wyoming, Laramie, 1966; 172 pp., illus., notes, pap., $5.00)* edited by Gene M. Gressley ‡

Arizona *(Doubleday, Garden City, N.Y., 1967, 61 pp., col. illus., $3.25).* by Hans W. Hannau ‡

Arrows Over Texas *(Naylor, San Antonio, 1967, 270 pp., illus., map, biblio., index, $5.95).* by Robert S. Reading ‡

The Art of Hunting Big Game in North America *(Alfred A. Knopf, N.Y.; 404 pp., illus., $8.95).* Drawings by Douglas Allen by Jack O'Connor *

As A City Upon a Hill: The Town in American History *(Alfred A. Knopf, $6.95).* by Page Smith †49

The Big Water Fight: Trials and Triumphs in Citizen Action on Problems of Supply, Pollution, Floods, and Planning Across the U.S.A. *(Stephen Green Press, Brattleboro, Vt., 1966; 246 pp., illus., notes, appen., glossary, index, $6.95).* by League of Women Voters, Education Fund †60

The Border and the Buffalo: An untold story of the Southwest Plains *(Citadel, N.Y., 1967, 454 pp., $7.50).* Reprint. by John R. Cook ‡

Century in the Saddle *(Cattlemen's Centennial, Denver, 1967; 365 pp., illus., facsim., biblio., index, $10.00)* Reproduction of drawings by Frederick Remington from *Century* magazine. by Richard Goff ‡

Claus Spreckels: The Sugar King in Hawaii *(University of Hawaii, Honolulu, $8.00).* by Jacob Adler *54

Colorado *(Doubleday, Garden City, 1967, 62 pp., illus., $3.25).* by Hans W. Hannau ‡

The Commerce of the Prairies by Josiah Gregg *(University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 1967, intro., map, index, pap., $1.95).* This book appeared as No. 24 in the Lakeside Classics, published in 1926, Lakeside Press. edited by Milo Milton Quaife ‡

The Creek Frontier, 1540 1783 *(University of Oklahoma, Norman, 1967; 343 pp., illus., maps, biblio., notes, index, $5.95).* by David H. Corkran †55

Daddy of 'em All. The Story of Cheyenne Frontier Days *(Flintlock, Cheyenne, 1967, 167 pp., illus., appen., index, $7.00).* by Robert D. Haneswortth ‡

Digging for Gold Without a Shovel: The Letters of Daniel Wadsworth Coit, from Mexico City to San Francisco, 1848 1851 *(Old West Publishing, Denver, 1967; 116 pp., illus., index, $22.50)* edited by George P. Hammond †59

Edwin Markham and the Ballad of the Gallows Bird *(Antioch Press, Yellow Springs, Ohio, 1967; 54 pp., intro., notes, cloth, $4.00, pap., $1.50).* edited by Louis Filler ‡

Eskimos of the Nushagak River: An Ethnographic History *(University of Washington, Seattle, 1967, 192 pp., biblio., index, $6.95)* by James W. Van Stone ‡

Farewell to Texas: A Vanishing Wilderness *(McGraw Hill, N.Y., 1967, 242 pp., illus., app., index, $6.95).* by William O. Douglas *

Favor the Bold: Custer, the Civil War Years *(Holt, Rinehart & Winston, N.Y., 1967, 308 pp., index, $6.95).* by D. A. Kinsley *

Firearms, Traps, & Tools of the Mountain Men: A Guide in Picture & Text to the Equipment of the Trappers and Fur Traders Who Opened the Old West from the 1820's to the 1840's *(Alfred A. Knopf, N.Y., 1967, illus., notes, appen., biblio., index, $12.50)* by Carl P. Russell. *

Fool's Gold: A Biography of John Sutter *(Coward-McCann, N.Y., 1967; 380 pp., illus., index, $6.95).* by Richard Dillon ‡

Forgotten People: A Study of New Mexicans *(Calvin Horn, Albuquerque, 1967; 98 pp., illus., $5.75).* by George I. Sanchez ‡

Freeways *(Reinhold, $12.50).* by Laurence Halprin †49

Frontiers of Fortune: The Fur Trade *(McGraw-Hill, N.Y., 1967, 127 pp., illus., biblio., index, $4.95).* by Donald Honig ‡

The Generous Miser: The Story of James Lick of California *(Ward Ritchie, Los Angeles, 1967, 95 pp., illus., appen., $10.00).* by Rosemary Lick ‡

The Great Divide. Travels in the Upper Yellowstone in the Summer of 1874, by the Earl of Dunraven *(University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 1967, 377 pp., illus., intro., pap., $2.65).* Introduction by Marshall Sprague ‡

Grizzly Country *(Alfred A. Knopf, N.Y., 1967; 302 pp., illus., $6.95).* by Andy Russell. †57

The Hawaiian Kingdom *(University of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1967, Vol. III, 764 pp., illus., notes, biblio., index, $12.00).* by Ralph S. Kuykendall *54

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GHOST TOWNS OF NEW MEXICO
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Iron Men: A Saga of the Deputy U.S. Marshals Who Rode the Indian Territory (*Doubleday, Garden City, 1967, 224 pp., illus., biblio., index, $5.95*). by C. H. McKENNON ‡

Joaquin Miller (*Twayne, N.Y., 1967; 140 pp., biblio., index, $3.95*) by ORCUTT WILLIAM FROST ‡

The Journal of Prince Alexander Liholiho (*University of Hawaii, Honolulu, $8.00*) edited by JACOB ADLER *54

The Life and Writings of Bartolome de las Casas (*University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, 1967; 310 pp., illus., notes, list of locations & abbrev., index, $12.50*). by HENRY RALP WAGNER in collaboration with HELEN RAND PARISH *62

Lines West: A Pictorial History of the Great Northern Railway Operations and Motive Power from 1887 to 1967 (*Superior, Seattle, 1967; 191 pp., illus., $12.95*) by CHARLES R. WOOD ‡

Los Angeles: The Ultimate City (*Oxford University, N.Y., 1967, 160 pp., index, $5.00*) by CHRISTOPHER RAND †51

Current Western Books is designed as a continuing tool for the reader interested in books of and about the American West. While we would not claim that this listing will be uniformly comprehensive, since we will not ordinarily include privately printed or limited edition materials, we do feel that the index, carefully brought up to date with each issue of *The American West Review*, will ultimately provide the most reliable guide to the latest in western books. The listing, arranged alphabetically by title, will take note of all books received during a given period of time (‡) those reviewed in *The American West Review* (†), and those advertised (*). It should be noted that the listing of a book as received but not reviewed does not necessarily imply that it will not be reviewed in a future issue.

Manifest Destiny in American Life (*Alfred A. Knopf, N.Y., 1963, 265 pp., biblio., index, $5.95*). by FREDERICK MERK †52

The Marvelous Country: Three Years in Arizona and New Mexico, the Apaches' Home (*Ross & Haines, Minneapolis, 1967, 340 pp., illus., index, $10.00*). Reprint by SAMUEL COZZENS ‡

Mary Austin Holley: The Texas Diary, 1835-1838 (*University of Texas, Austin, 1967; 120 pp., illus., notes, appen., $7.50*) edited by J. P. BRYAN ‡

Narrow Gauge to the Redwoods: The Story of the North Pacific Coast Railroad and San Francisco Bay Paddle Wheel Ferries (*Trans-Anglo Bks., Los Angeles, 1967, 168 pp., illus., facsims., maps, $3.75, pap., $1.75*). by A. BRAY DICKINSON ‡

North Toward Home (*Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1967, 438 pp., $5.95*) An autobiography. by WILLIE MORRIS ‡

North to Yesterday (*Alfred A. Knopf, N.Y., 1967; 310 pp., $5.95*). A novel by ROBERT FLYNN †57

The Oregon Question: Essays in Anglo-American Diplomacy & Politics (*Belknap Press of Harvard University, Cambridge, 1967, 427 pp., notes, index, $7.95*). by FREDERICK MERK †52

Parker's Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains (*Ross & Haines, Minneapolis, 1967, 380 pp., map of Oregon territory, index, $8.75*). Reprint by REV. SAMUEL PARKER, A.M. ‡

A Pictographic History of the Oglala Sioux (*University of Nebraska, Lincoln, illus., cloth $17.95*). Drawings by Amos Bad Heart Bull by HELEN H. BLISH *55

The Pioneer in the American Novel, 1900-1950 (*University of Oklahoma, Norman, 1967, 124 pp., biblio., notes, index, $5.95*). by NICHOLAS J. KAROLIDES †58

Politics in New Mexico (*University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, 1967; 335 pp., illus., biblio., index, $7.50*) by JACK ELLSWORTH HOLMES ‡

A Princeton Cowboy (*Denton Berkeland, Colorado Springs, 1967; 124 pp., illus., $3.75*). by CHANNING E. SWEET ‡

Print in a Wild Land (*Doubleday, N.Y., 1967, 274 pp., biblio., index, $5.95*). The story of western journalism on the frontier by JOHN MYERS MYERS † 7

Quarter Horses: A Story of Two Centuries (*University of Oklahoma, 1967; 192 pp., illus., notes, gloss., biblio., index, $5.95*) by ROBERT MOORMAN DENHARDT ‡

The Rediscovery of New Mexico, 1580-1594 (*University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, $12.50*) Coronado Historical Series No. 3. by GEORGE P. HAMMOND and AGAPITO REY *62

The Rock Art of Texas Indians (*University of Texas, Austin, 1967, 239 pp., plates, maps, biblio., appen., index, $12.50*) Paintings by Forrest Kirkland. by W. W. NEWCOMB, JR. †56

The Rocky Mountain Journals of William Marshall Anderson: The West in 1834 (*Huntington Library, San Marino, Calif., 1967; 430 pp., notes, biblio., index, $12.50*). edited by DALE MORGAN and ELEANOR TOWLES HARRIS ‡

Scripps Institution of Oceanography: First Fifty Years (*Ward Ritchie, Los Angeles, 1967, 217 pp., illus., biblio., appen., index, $9.50*) by HELEN RAITT and BEATRICE MOULTON ‡

The Short Novels of Jack Schaefer (*Houghton Mifflin, $6.95*). •

South Sea Supercargo (*University of Hawaii, Honolulu, $4.50*). by LOUIS BECKE *54

Time for Outrage (*Doubleday & Co., N.Y., 1967; 445 pp., $5.95*). A novel based on a vendetta in the Southwest. by AMELIA BEAN ‡

To Be A Man (*Little Brown & Co., Boston, $5.95*). by WILLIAM DECKER *56

Too Far North . . . Too Far South (*Westernlore Press, Los Angeles, 1967, 186 pp., illus., maps, biblio., index, $7.50*). The story of the Gadsden Purchase. by ODIE B. FALLS †57

CORRECTION

In the December 1, 1967, issue of THE AMERICAN WEST REVIEW, Professor Roy F. Nichols was identified as a past president of the Western History Association. This was in error. Professor Nichols, distinguished historian and winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 1949, is a former president of the American Historical Association. Our sincere regrets to Professor Nichols.

The War on Powder River: The History of an Insurrection (*University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 1967, 320 pp., notes, biblio., index, pap., $1.95*) by HELENA HUNTINGTON SMITH ‡

The Water Crisis (*H. W. Wilson Co., N.Y., 1967; 191 pp., biblio. of pamphlets, books and documents with excerpts, $3.00*) Reference shelf, Vol. 38, No. 6 edited by GEORGE A. NIKOLAIEFF †60

Water: The Vital Essence, A Report on the Present Water Situation in Oceanography, National Defense, Water Pollution, and Supply With an Outlook for the Future (*Harper & Row, N.Y., 1967, 223 pp., illus., index, $5.95*) by PETER BRIGGS †60

The Water Crisis (*Frederick A. Praeger, N.Y., 1967, 305 pp., appen., biblio., index, $5.95*) by SENATOR FRANK E. MOSS †60

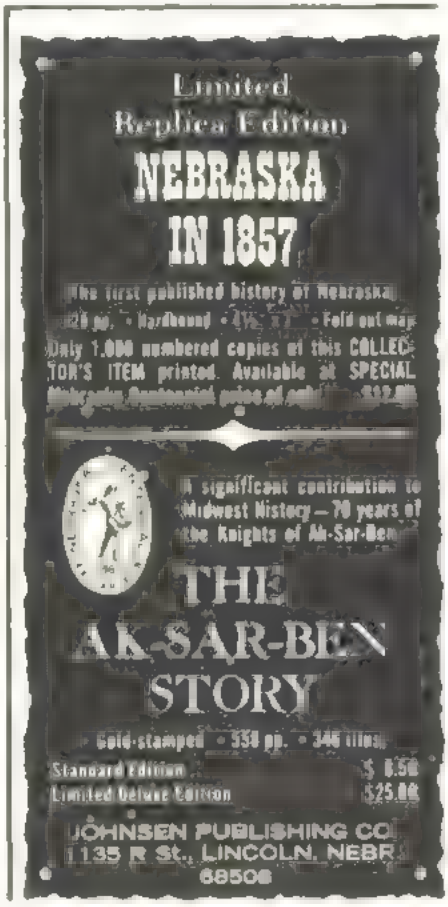
What I Saw in California (*Ross & Haines, Minneapolis, 1967, 467 pp., index, $8.75*) Reprint by EDWIN BRYANT ‡

Whittier: Independent College in California, Founded by Quakers, 1887 (*Ward Ritchie, Los Angeles, 1967, 405 pp., illus., biblio., index, $7.25*) by CHARLES W. COOPER ‡

West of the West: Witnesses to the California Experience, 1542-1906 (*E. P. Dutton, N.Y., 1967, 526 pp., illus., notes, biblio., index, $10.00*) by ROBERT KIRSCH and WILLIAM S. MURPHY ‡

With Heritage So Rich: A Report of a Special Committee on Historic Preservation (*Random House, N.Y., 1966, 230 pp., illus., biblio., index, $10.00*) by ALBERT RAINS and LAURANCE G. HENDERSON †49

Yosemite (*Doubleday, Garden City, 1967, 61 pp., illus., $3.25*). by HANS W. HANNAU ‡



Boom Oil! *continued from page 15*

the Indians paid without complaint and took their goods home to look at, as though they were treasures whose functions might be unknown, but whose value was surely beyond price. A writer for the *Literary Digest* who visited the Osage oil field saw the Indians squatting in their yards, still eating their food with their fingers out of big yellow bowls. They had no idea what the silverware they had bought was for. The writer also saw them "use the big cut-glass bowls the merchants had sold them to wash their vegetables in, and cloisonne vases to hold their baseball bats." Thanks to these same fast-talking merchants, the Osages bought pianos they could not play, phonographs they could not operate, and radios they could not understand—all at fantastic prices.

Nor was such direct exploitation all. Men who worried that hucksters might swindle the Osages appointed themselves as their guardians—with full sanction of the law—and got one-fourth of their wards' estates. Whites fought one another to become an Indian's guardian (some Osages had more than one, some had dozens), until the authorities realized what was going on and in 1925 outlawed the practice.

There were still other ways to get the Indian's money. "Indians love to gamble," a magazine writer observed, "and so do most of the whites in Oklahoma." Somehow, luck favored the white gamblers in Burbank casinos. And if Indian men were unlucky in their encounters with white men, Indian women fared worse. Dressed in white girls' clothes, their hair styles copied from New York fashion magazines, the young Indian girls came to town with their rich fathers and roamed aimlessly in the streets. For the cowboys and "rough, swearing" roustabouts, who were tired of working for a living, the girls presented a golden opportunity, and they took advantage of it. They "took these girls off," said a reporter for the *Literary Digest*; "some came back married; others only with unwanted babies." The men got the girls' oil money—if they had any—and spent it in a wild free-for-all on Saturday night. Then they seduced others, got their money too, and left them in shacks and hotel rooms.

Finally, there were the outright murders. Examples abound. A white woman named Luella married Henry Moncravie, a full-blooded Osage, and talked him into moving to Kansas. When they got there, she shot him to death and inherited his estate—valued at several hundred thousand dollars—because the law provided no punishment for somebody who killed an Indian off the reservation. There was also the infamous Hale gang. The members of this gang—four of them—married into one rich Osage family after another and murdered the girls for their legacies. They grew so bold in their bloody work that Congress was moved to pass a law in 1925 forbidding anybody accused of killing an Osage to share in his estate. A courageous tribal attorney named J. M. Humphreys, assisted by United States Secret Service agents, labored for three years gathering enough evidence to send the Hale gang to prison for life.

Again, a syndicate of powerful cattlemen and oil racketeers in Burbank conspired to intimidate the Osages into signing their lands away. When the Indians refused to be intimidated, the racketeers brutally murdered them, picking them off on the roads with sniper fire, bushwacking them in Burbank's back streets, and blowing up their houses with dynamite. Why did the government not bring these men to justice? One example will suffice. When Henry Roan Horse was murdered in his car, government lawmen indicted a farmer and a wealthy rancher as suspects, then summoned over one hundred witnesses. But none of them would testify. They were afraid. The accused waited patiently until their lawyers found a technical flaw in their indictments, whereupon they were set free to continue their terrorism.

By 1920 Oklahoma seemed to have given itself over completely to oil boom crime. Downstate, near the Canadian River, the Cities Service Oil Company in March, 1923, discovered oil in Seminole County and set in motion another cycle of exploitation and violence. The new boom towns were Seminole City and Bowlegs; the new hosts for oil-field parasites were illiterate Seminole farmers who were persuaded or threatened into signing their rights away with their thumbprints. Seminole City and Bowlegs soon became replicas of Drumright and Ragtown. As one veteran oil woman said, visiting Seminole's boom towns was "like seeing an old movie again: the same clapboard joints, saloons, tent cities. The same miserable roads. . . . The same unbridled violence." The center of much of the violence was Bishop's Alley in Seminole City, where Tangle-Eye Hall operated "a palace of sin" called the Big C, and where Barrel House Sue and Big Emma Smythe operated honky-tonk brothels that rivaled any house the old Barbary Coast of San Francisco might have advertised. According to Bill Bur-

chardt, the two madams even started a circuit-type operation, moving their girls back and forth between Seminole City and Bowlegs, until, under pressure from the lawmen, they left for other boom towns in Texas.

But, thanks to Cities Service, lawlessness around Seminole City was short-lived. Until the early twenties responsible oil companies regarded boom-town violence as a necessary evil, since their workers had no place else to let off steam. But Cities Service set about to change that: the company built a model oil camp near Seminole City, complete with bunkhouses, neat white cottages, an ice plant, a garage, a recreational hall, tennis courts, and children's playgrounds. The plan worked so well that other companies also built oil camps with recreational facilities. Men moved their families in. They let off steam in athletic games and Saturday night parties in the recreational halls. Anyone looking for the old kind of trouble could still find it, of course, but not so readily.

In the meantime, other forces had been at work upstate, in Tulsa, to restore order to crime-racked northern Oklahoma. Tulsa, the gateway to the Cleveland, Cushing, and Osage oil fields, had become "the Mid-Continent Oil Capital," where many of the large oil companies had established headquarters. The population had risen from 18,182 in 1910 to 72,075 in 1920—an increase of 296 percent. Half that population seemed to be the same kind of riffraff that inhabited Burbank, Drumright, and Ragtown. With a plethora of whorehouses and gambling casinos and a rising crime rate, Tulsa might well have been called the mid-continent crime capital.

Then on May 26, 1921, the Tulsa *Tribune* made an ominous statement: "Tulsa has had a pretty exhibit of the sort of thing that brings the Ku-Klux [Klan] into a town. [Its] purpose . . . might be as much to put the fear of God into the hearts of derelict officials as the fear of death into the hearts of the criminal." Three months later a Klan chaplain from Atlanta, Georgia, held a rally in Convention Hall; and on the last night of August the Tulsa Klan No. 2 initiated three hundred grim-faced citizens into its ranks, in a hooded, torch-lit ceremony that might well have sent chills down the backs of law-abiding citizens as well as "crapshooters," "wife-beaters," "free-lovers," "whores," and "crooks."

The Tulsa Klan was organized as part of a nationwide movement that had begun in Georgia in 1915 to keep immigrants out of the United States and to save the land from alleged Jewish and Catholic conspiracies. Its banners stridently proclaimed, "America for the Americans." By 1921, the Klan was also fighting another enemy of "100 percent Americanism": the revolution against the Victorian moral code that had begun after World War I. It was this new campaign against loose moral standards that had led perhaps a million concerned white Anglo-Saxon Protestants into the secret society. And it was this same campaign that now convinced some 3,200 Tulsans that the Klan was also the answer to their fears and problems. The wickedness in the oil fields could be seen as a symptom of a more general moral insanity, and Tulsans were ready to do something about it, even if it meant taking the law into their own hands or going outside the law.

In September, 1921, the Tulsa Klan launched a violent crusade for law and order and moral conformity: it whipped a suspected highjacker, raided bootleg joints, purged Tulsa's red-light districts, and threatened to have local officials removed from office unless they enforced the law. At the same time, subsidiary chapters appeared at Ponca City near Burbank, at Bristow and Slick in the Cushing Field, and at Ardmore near Ragtown in the Healdton Field. In full regalia, bearing torches and fiery crosses, Klansmen waged a vicious vigilante war against criminals, wife-beaters, "loose" women, and anybody else who did not agree with their methods or conform to their moral standards. The burning cross in Oklahoma's oil fields became a symbol of counter-terrorism in the name of Right and Morality.

Gradually, though, Klan terrorism gave way to more civilized methods of controlling Oklahoma's boom towns. After 1923, oil companies increasingly adopted the Cities Service model, constructing oil camps and recreational facilities for their workers at most of the major oil fields. At the same time, citizens' law-and-order leagues, working with representatives of the oil companies and with honest lawmen, cleaned up the boom towns by legal means. In time Oklahoma rejected Klan terrorism altogether, and by 1929 there were no more than two thousand members left in the state.

But what finally controlled the violence of the boom towns was the decline of the oil fields themselves. The Cushing Field, for example, fell from a peak production of 49,080,000 barrels in 1915 (nearly one-third of the nation's total oil output that year) to 5,988,000 barrels in 1929. Similarly, the Healdton Field had declined from an all-time high of 18,354,000 barrels in 1917 to 4,599,000 in 1929. Burbank fell from 31,969,000 barrels in 1927 to 10,139,000 in 1929. As production subsided, and as the

oil companies undertook joint control of the fields and built their oil camps, what lawless elements remained in the dwindling boom towns now moved on to the undergrounds of such large mid-western cities as Chicago and St. Louis, or to the last frontier of the old-style oil boom—Borger, on the moon-like plains of the Texas Panhandle.

By 1930 places like Ragtown, Whizbang, and satellite cities around Drumright had become ghost towns, whose abandoned buildings groaned in the prairie wind. Burbank reverted to its original status as a supply and trading center, to which the Osages continued to come for necessities and a few luxury goods. Although most of the white riffraff had long since gone, the scars of what they had done remained, and conscientious, unbigoted men worked diligently to provide schools for Osage children and to protect all the Indians from their white neighbors and from any further extortion.

Not all of Oklahoma's oil towns declined or disappeared. Seminole City, for example, became an industrial town, with paved and lighted streets, schools, and brick business establishments in place of the dives and shanties in Bishop's Alley. Likewise, Bartlesville and Ponca City, both located near the Osage fields, became industrial trading centers. Ponca City itself thrived largely because of oil tycoon E. W. Marland. Marland, whose oil holdings were valued at one hundred million dollars, was the small town's ideal first citizen: a rich man who liked to give his money away to community causes. Marland gave his away to anything and everything he could think of: to churches of all denominations, to the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts, to orphan homes, colleges, and universities all over the state. He built an athletic field and a hospital for Ponca City. He established and stocked a wildlife preserve, built a public swimming pool, gave land to the town along with one hundred thousand dollars for a public service building which the American Legion, the Masons, and a young men's club all could use. Finally, he introduced polo and English fox hunting to Ponca City's dazzled citizens. On certain sunny days, if you were a cowboy riding herd out near Ponca City or a worker on a nearby oil rig, you might hear the brassy sound of English hunting horns, and see an imported English fox fleeing across the wide Oklahoma prairie, followed by a horseback party of Ponca City townsmen, dutifully outfitted in red coats and black hats and boots, doing their best to humor their eccentric benefactor.

Tulsa also grew in spite of the decline of her surrounding oil fields. In fact, Tulsa grew larger and faster than any other Oklahoma oil town, except perhaps Oklahoma City, where the last of the state's oil bonanzas was just getting under way. By 1930 Tulsa had a population of 141,258 and a cluster of impressive new skyscrapers, many of them owned by the oil companies themselves. Moreover, new landscaped residential sections sprawled over onto Arkansas Flats and up over the high grounds to the north and east; and mansions of oil magnates rose like Italian palaces in Tulsa's exclusive districts. A newspaperwoman, surveying the city from her downtown office, wrote that Tulsa stood as an everlasing monument to the greatness of the Oklahoma oil industry—an industry, she might have pointed out, that had already produced more wealth than all the California and Nevada gold fields combined.

Yet there were others who remembered a different side of the oil boom. They were reminded of it when they drove through one of the oil fields, and stopped at some forgotten cemetery, overgrown now with brush, to stare quietly at a wooden grave-marker there. They were reminded of it again when they left, and drove by the remains of some boom town—perhaps it was Ragtown or Whizbang—that had epitomized all the lawlessness and unrestrained individualism of what may have been America's last Wild West frontier. □

In preparing this article, the author made extensive use of Carl Coke Rister's encyclopedic study, *Oil! Titan of the Southwest* (Norman, Okla., 1949), and Ruth Sheldon Knowles' *The Greatest Gamblers* (New York, 1959), a gracefully-written account of American oil exploration, by a veteran oil woman. The following sources and special studies were also relied on for specific information and helpful insights: John P. "Slim" Jones's authentic reminiscence, "Ten Years in the Oil Fields," in *Borger, the Little Oklahoma* (n.p., n.d.); Mody Boatright, *Folklore of the Oil Industry* (Dallas, 1963); Gilbert L. Robinson, "History of the Healdton Field" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1937); the *Literary Digest*, LXXXIX (April 3, 1926), 42-44; the *Outlook*, CLX (January 27, 1932), 114; the *Nation*, CXXV (August 17, 1927), 151-53; Bill Burchardt, "The Oil Rush Wild West," *True West*, December 1966, 34-38; Charles C. Alexander's trenchant study, *The Ku Klux Klan in the Southwest* (Lexington, Ky., 1965); and Lerona Rosamond Morris, *Oklahoma: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow* (Guthrie, Okla., 1930).

"Boom Oil" marks the third appearance of **Stephen B. Oates** *in* THE AMERICAN WEST, *previous articles appearing in the Summer, 1965, and August, 1967, issues. Currently in the Department of History at the University of Texas at Arlington, he is general editor for a special issue of* THE AMERICAN WEST *on the Republic of Texas, tentatively scheduled for publication in May, 1968.*

Siege and Conquest *continued from page 32*

to submit engineering reports on how to improve the Wawona entrance, and Fisher was willing to try for more money for road-building.

Later in 1912, at a banquet of the American Civic Association in Baltimore, Fisher spoke of "the very insistent automobilists of the United States, with most enthusiastic statistics as to their numbers and growth and influence," and he proposed, as did the association, that Congress create a Bureau of National Parks that could get at problems powerfully, on a nationwide basis. The banquet was the occasion of a notable address by James Bryce, the British Ambassador to the United States, who spoke with wisdom and prescience about the need to create national parks and remember what they are for: "With your great population and the growing desire to enjoy the beauties of Nature, you do not have any more than you need." In one long passage he advised Americans to keep the parks, specifically Yosemite, in good condition.

If Adam had known what harm the serpent was going to work, he would have tried to prevent him from finding lodgment in Eden; and if you were to realize what the result of the automobile will be in that wonderful, that incomparable valley, you will keep it out. The automobile means dust, it moves too fast and interferes with detailed esthetic enjoyment, it prevents contemplation, it destroys the whole feeling of the spontaneity and freshness of primitive nature.

After reading both Colby's testimony at Yosemite and Bryce's address at Baltimore, the Massachusetts forester and conservationist, G. Frederick Schwarz, wrote Colby. He said he was surprised that Colby and Muir would admit cars into the Valley "when the time comes," a time that "is very close at hand." Even allowing that automobiles will evolve, said Schwarz, and become more quiet, smoother-running, and perhaps odorless, such machinery would be artificial and out of place in any of the parks, with "the wonderful charm of their great, brooding quietness." It would destroy their "*necessary* characteristics."

Colby quickly replied, saying that "this matter has received careful thought and consideration by both Mr. Muir and myself." He gave three arguments. First, automobiles mean a tremendous increase in travel and larger congressional appropriations. Second, horses would be relieved of the strain of pulling stages, which rapidly cripples and exhausts them. Electric lines could not be thought of, for their ugly poles and tracks were constantly in sight. Third, Colby saw the automobile as a new force in civilization, "with tremendous impetus" and "irresistible force and reason behind its use." Therefore, opposing it would weaken the conservationist cause and "give our detractors the opportunity of calling us visionary, fakirs, etc."

Schwarz wrote back to suggest that it would not work for long to let cars in and expect them to stay immobile. He cited destructive changes he had seen in England's New Forest and on old Cape Cod in Massachusetts. "My experience has been that automobiles, notwithstanding their many practical advantages, soon change the character of a locality." He had no argument, he said, to meet Colby's contentions that the car had an irresistible power to establish itself. He could only hope for the best.

THE DEBATE over letting automobiles in centered on a landscape that already had been briefly violated by automobiles, though not by that nineteenth-century ravager of vistas, the railroad. The Yosemite Valley Railroad came within a few miles in 1907, to the El Portal terminus, from which concessionaires' omnibuses carried tourists up along a water-sprinkled road into the Valley. It was in 1900, prompt as the new century, that the first tourist automobile arrived in the Valley—a Stanley Steamer with a body specially built for the trip. A few cars ventured in during the next few years when lackadaisical state officials, oriented toward *laissez-faire*, ran the Valley. In 1905 the first motorcycle coughed its way in.

Then in 1906 a big change came. As urged by John Muir, Theodore Roosevelt, and Robert Underwood Johnson and his *Century Magazine*, both California and Congress agreed to have Yosemite Valley become part of the national park that had been created around it in 1890. The editor of the *Oakland Enquirer* expressed the key idea: "Yosemite Valley really belongs to the United States. It should be looked upon as a possession of all the people." Major Harry C. Benson, acting superintendent, moved the headquarters of the national park from Wawona to the Valley, where he tightened the rules, and the enforcement of them, for all activities including the driving of cars:

All automobiles shall enter the Valley between the hours of 9 A.M. and 11 A.M. or between 4 P.M. and 7 P.M. and leave the Valley between the hours of 5 A.M. and 7 A.M. or after 6 P.M.

Automobiles entering the Valley on the North side of the River will not cross over the River except at the bridge of the Hotel.

Those entering on the South side of the river will cross to the North side at the El Capitan bridge.

Speed limit will not exceed 8 miles per hour.

During their stay in the Valley, the automobiles will be left at the hotel or camp at which their owners may be staying and will not be permitted to run about the floor of the Valley except by permission from the Superintendent and between the hours of 10 A.M. and 4 P.M.

Though cars steadily increased in numbers, the behavior of their drivers did not improve, and on June 4, 1907, Major Benson wrote the Secretary of the Interior to complain of drivers who "do not comply with these instructions and are constantly a source of annoyance and friction and are constantly endangering the lives of tourists in the Valley." At the moment he was particularly concerned by plans of the Oakland Automobile Dealers Association to organize a "run" of forty or fifty cars to the Valley. He had before him a newspaper item that quoted a car dealer: "Anything that a car does in the way of 'stunts' helps a great deal to sell it." To forestall this run with its implicit threat to the life and limb of tourists, Benson issued an order: "By direction of the Secretary of the Interior automobiles will not be permitted to enter Yosemite Valley." The Secretary in Washington approved the decree, which held through three conservationist secretaries of the Interior—the remainder of the Roosevelt administration and all of the Taft.

As seasons passed and the automobile business flourished, began to feel its power, and formed alliances, the issue started rapidly to shape up. The California Promotion Committee, "an Organization for the Commercial and Industrial Development of California," requested the Secretary to open Yosemite to "restricted use of automobiles." In a petition dated May 1, 1909, signed by officers of the Automobile Club of California, the San Francisco Motor Club, the Audubon Society of California, and numerous chambers of commerce, the Promotion Committee argued that Benson's rules "work a hardship on the many users" of cars, that horses are now "accustomed" to cars, and that the rules keep tourists from seeing "this scenic wonder with great facility and comfort." A San Francisco lawyer, a former state commissioner for Yosemite, argued for letting cars in during the hours of 2 to 5 A.M., before the stages started to run: "I do not believe that [the United States] should stop the march of progress." The Pacific Coast Auto Jobbers Club wrote the Secretary to persuade him "that this National Pleasure Ground is one that should be opened to vehicles of all descriptions, especially automobiles, as the class of people who travel by them is certainly one to be desired." Ebenezer Knowlton, author decades before of a guidebook to Yosemite, a worthy who had, he said, all the best connections with judges, generals, senators, congressmen, and governors, asked for permission to drive in. "Our machine is new, —four-cylinder, —forty-eight horse power, noiseless, smokeless, sparkless. . . . We do not go for any reckless, rollicking, irresponsible 'spurting' regardless of passing teams or dry grainfields"

The Studebaker Bros. Co. of California ["Carriages, Wagons, Street Sprinklers, Harnesses & Robes, Automobiles"] wanted cars allowed to enter on the Big Oak Flat Road at certain hours, which "will increase the number of automobiles in the State and will also have a tendency to have a great many cars shipped to California during the season." The toll-road owners and merchants in the foothill towns began to see the possibilities of new income and proposed ways to handle mixed traffic.

In 1911 and 1912, as automobiles pushed into the national economy and psyche, dealers and motorists—and their newspaper friends who had invented the Automobile Section—increased their clamor. After all, in two years Californians, patronizing 110 different makes, had bought 42,000 new cars. There were now more cars than buggies on California roads. A feature story in the *San Francisco Call* was headed "California Motorists Keep Up a Steady Rapping to Have the Gates of Yosemite Valley Swing Open for Them." The writer declared the car would soon "penetrate the red taped walls of the interior department at Washington," where the government "stands by some ancient ruling." Always the talk was of getting into the Valley, or autoists' rights, not of seeing anything in the Valley. It was an argument of means, not ends. Riding in a car was an end in itself.

Letters and wires poured in to California senators and congressmen from car owners, editors, power and light executives, bankers, educators, realtors. F. G. Seaver of the San Diego Building Company wrote Senator John D. Works to complain about high tolls, rigged stage-

coach schedules, and dirty, uncomfortable riding. He objected to the argument about keeping the Park "as near to nature as possible" when electric lights and telephones were there and "every modern convenience and improvement . . . except the auto." Seaver went on:

> It appears all wrong to me to talk "see America first" and then turn our National Parks over to monopolies that make "seeing America" as difficult as possible. The question is whether the Yosemite is to be for the people or the stage line and hotels.

Works called on President Taft's personal secretary and on Secretary Fisher, and said the government was acting "both unjustly and unwisely." While the doughty Fisher stood pat, he also heard from the minority side, as from a California official of the American Farmers Alliance of America who protested vigorously but ungrammatically that "the automobile interest regardless of the immense damage that the are bond to inflict to our National Parks, are getting ready to impose on you, ther arguments are selfish."

Excitement grew during the early fall of 1912, after Fisher had issued invitations to the conference in Yosemite. When Fisher passed through San Francisco on October 13, en route from Hawaii to Yosemite, the *San Francisco Call* assumed that victory was only a day or so away.

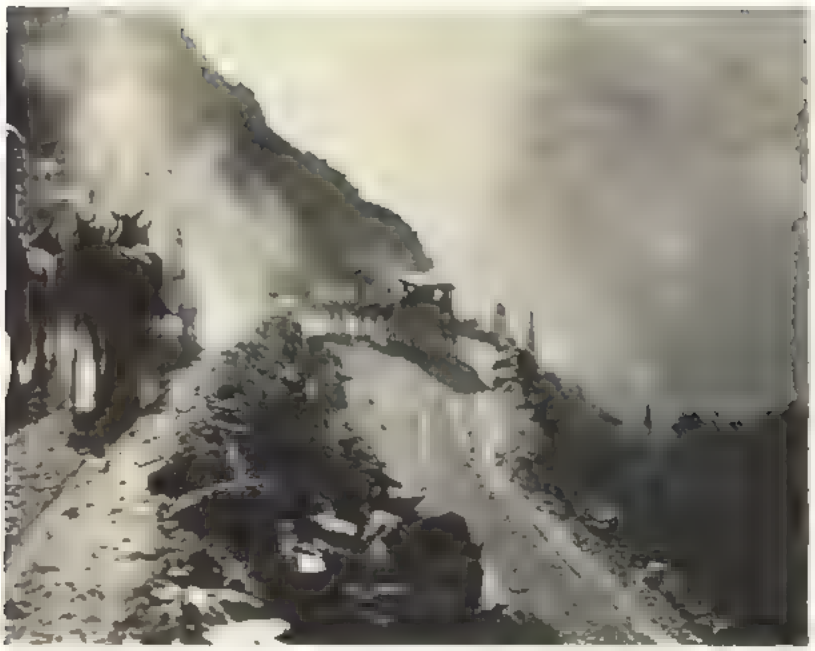
THE CHILLING DISAPPOINTMENT of October 16, when Fisher astutely held off action, was balanced on March 4 the next year when Fisher left office, along with Taft and conservation, and Franklin K. Lane, an important member of the Interstate Commerce Commission, became Secretary of the Interior under Woodrow Wilson and the New Freedom. Since Lane was a Californian and a liberal, practical politician, he was expected to sympathize with "this right of the automobilists" to enter the forbidden valley. As Lane delayed the fateful announcement, awaiting a conference with the new acting superintendent, William Littlebrant, the letters continued to come, some for ingress to a "playground" and others for protection of "the primeval beauty and grandeur of the ancient days of our beloved country." One Henry T. Wilson, writing from the Palace Hotel on March 31, urged Lane to make the people use

> . . . early methods of conveyance, so as not let the passing generations forget how their forefathers were accustomed to travel. Let the people walk or ride horses. No economic consideration can be involved in denying automobiles access to the National Parks.

Lane proposed another Yosemite hearing for April 23, 1913, and then dropped the idea of more talk. It was time for decision. On April 30 came his literary "Memorandum for the Press," which got one inch in the *New York Times* but shook the western automotive world. "I have decided to allow automobiles to enter the Yosemite Valley," he wrote. "This form of transportation has come to stay and to close the Valley against automobiles would be as absurd as the fight for many years made by old naval men against the adoption of steam in the Navy. Before we know it, they will be dropping into the Yosemite by airship." (The first plane landed in 1919.) He admitted the argument that roads had not been "sufficiently good" and said that only one entrance was good enough now, but he was sure that the automobile people would see to it that roads were improved. As for the argument "of romance, of sentiment" – the idea that the automobile "is less picturesque than the stagecoach" – said Lane, "I think that depends entirely upon the imagination and the association of the stagecoach with romance. After a time we will come to associate the automobile with it. For further justification of this view, see Kipling's poem, 'Romance is Dead, the Cave Man said.'" His final point echoed the autoists' thesis and forecast what was to happen in the Valley: "I want to make our parks as accessible as possible to the great mass of people."

"Autoists Exult over Victory in Yosemite Fight," cried the *San Francisco Examiner*. "The triumph for the Motor Car Dealers Association is in keeping with the record being made by this State as the greatest user of automobiles in the world." Lane had given "motor-car owners their rights" and kept pace "with modern progress." The California Automobile Association and the Automobile Club of Southern California each also claimed the victory. But not until printed entrance forms had arrived in the Valley on August 23, after a delay that irritated eager victors, did the Park actually open to cars. By October 1 a total of 127 cars had entered.

Open, yes, but not to the absolute free-wheeling that some drivers counted on. For several years only the Coulterville road was open, the narrow, twisting lane that came in at the foot of the Valley. There was a block system of certain hours for entering and certain hours



Switchback on the Big Oak Flat Road, ca. 1903

for leaving the Valley. At night a chain blocked the road. There was brake inspection. Speed was limited to five miles per hour inbound on the descent into Merced River Canyon, and six miles elsewhere except on straight stretches where approaching teams were visible. There ten miles per hour was the top limit, and teams had the right of way. When automobiles halted at hotels or at hotel camps, they had to be emptied of passengers and baggage inside of five minutes, while the driver or chauffeur remained in the driver's seat, then get at once to the garage "and nowhere else." Cars could not be started before 7:30 A.M. Campers could run their cars only from the campsite to the garage, and this only "for the purpose of restocking or repairing same," between 7:30 A.M. and 5 P.M. Motorcycles were prohibited, as was smoking in cars. Banned were sirens, open mufflers, and any but manually squeezed bulb horns, a rule that greatly upset the New Jersey manufacturer of the electrical Klaxon and Klaxonet horns.

There were people like Charles Wesley Reed, president of the State Civil Service Commission, who wanted peace and quiet in the Valley, found "automobilists as a class . . . intolerant of the rights of others," and trusted "that the rule that autos must proceed immediately to the garage will never be rescinded." But Reed spoke for the losing side. In July, 1914, the Park had its first civilian and full-fledged superintendent, Mark Daniel, a landscape engineer who proposed to straddle the dilemma, to "make access to all parts of the valley easier" and yet "not, in any way, attempt to add or detract from the natural grandeur of the scenery." In 1915 motor stages replaced the horse-drawn stagecoaches, "horse-power" became a dead metaphor, and the frontier era reached its symbolic termination.

Yosemite was open in time for the fairs, as thousands of eastern Americans, kept from Europe by World War I, were coming on rubber tires to look at their West. The story and title of the Cole Porter–T. L. Riggs comic opera of 1916 used the popular phrase that caught the mood: *See America First*. Herbert A. Jump, whose *Yosemite: A Spiritual Interpretation* appeared in 1916, spoke of "the far-sighted wisdom that is constructing automobile highways . . . into the very heart of the amazing grandeur," and the Yosemite portfolio in *The Mentor* for October of the same year showed a long line of cars and motor buses lined up at Yosemite Village: "Automobiles everywhere. There is even a 'jitney' service in the Valley." Yosemite automobile statistics became for most people a matter of joyful astonishment and a proof of progress, even though motorists like Thomas D. Murphy complained of being "hampered with a lot of government rules and red tape." In 1914, 739 cars entered the Park; in 1915, 2,270; in 1916, 4,043; in 1917, 6,521; in 1918, despite the war, 7,621; in 1928, after the All-Year Road had opened the Park to one and all, anytime, 136,689 cars.

Meanwhile, people continued to praise and blame the automobile, often in almost adjacent sentences. In 1921, in his *Yosemite and Its High Sierra*, John H. Williams said, "The most effective step yet taken to make the National Park of practical use to the people was the admission of private automobiles," and also Yosemite Valley is "in grave danger of speedily becoming the most overcrowded tourist center in America." Stephen T. Mather, the borax executive who became the first director of the National Park Service [1917–1929], and whose job was created by the attention that automobiles had brought to the parks, was himself an "auto crank" and loved to drive his own Packard. He once urged D. J. Desmond, a new concessionaire and organizer of the Yosemite National Park Company, to build a hotel in the Valley. Desmond foresaw empty rooms and bankruptcy. Mather exclaimed: "Why, look at those cars! There must be close

to two hundred of them. Where's your imagination, man? Some day there'll be a thousand." Desmond said, "Maybe."

At the National Park Conference in Yellowstone in 1911 a landscape architect and planner had asked for a definition of the function of national parks, and no one had given an answer. Five years later the "Act to Establish a National Park Service" clearly said that

> . . . the fundamental purpose of the said parks, monuments and reservations . . . is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

This statement helped, and now Mather and his assistants Horace Albright and Robert Yard composed a definition for their own use: "areas of unmodified natural conditions, each the finest of its type in the country, preserved forever as a system from all industrial uses." Involved were educational values and superlative landscape, which fitted hand and glove. But also involved was the internal contradiction in the Act of 1916 between the ideal of preservation and the idea of use—a contradiction that no one much saw then, just as no one much saw that each running engine is a kind of industrial use. Secretary Lane himself, honest and goodhearted, believed in exploitation of resources. It was he who resolutely gave Hetch Hetchy to San Francisco, violating the park. He and his associates were patriotic Americans and western boosters who saw national parks as bringing in carloads of potential settlers and investors. Lane admired the American pioneer. In *Fruits of Faith* he said, "To conquer nature man broke down the gates of the Garden of Eden and came forth to meet the challenge of an unadorned world."

The policies of wide-open gates that Lane and Mather set lead to the present. Since the end of World War II the number of cars per year have passed the half-million mark and kept increasing. Bigger and bigger urban crowds are less and less interested in seeing nature or hiking, more and more interested in sunbathing, beer-drinking, dancing, nibbling between meals, shopping, and watching entertainment. Pine groves and apple orchards and meadows give way to parking lots. Campgrounds become densely populated, one-story tenements not unlike Arab refugee camps. On summer weekends, off-limits parked cars, people, and litter are everywhere. Millions of feet trample riverbanks into loose rubble, meadows into packed brown dirt. Traffic roars twenty-four hours a day, echoing from the mighty cliffs of El Capitan and Glacier Point. Truck drivers gun their engines. Motorcycles sputter at all hours. At the highway entrances traffic slows to a crawl or stops, and at 9 P.M. the autoists who push along the open meadows to see a stunt called the "fire fall" immobilize the Valley road loops. The Valley that Greeley and Emerson, Grant and Garfield endured long coach rides to see, that Bierstadt and Moran crossed the continent to paint, that Ansel Adams has photographed magnificently by tilting his camera up from or away from the people and cars—this Valley is now "incomparable" as an exhibit of ecological imbalance. There are too many people for the water supply, too many gallons of sewage for the earth to hold, too many campers for the wood supply, too many fishermen for the fish, too many vehicles for the terrain. There are so many thousands of campfires and commercial kitchens, and idling engines and gaseous exhaust pipes, that the atmosphere grows misty and smoggy.

Only the concessionaires are happy, selling food and trinkets in their shops and supermarkets to daily populations of forty to fifty thousand persons, and pumping more gasoline per day than there is water in Mirror Lake in August. There has even been serious talk of putting up high-rise hotels to house the visitors, as at the southern end of Lake Tahoe.

In the 1940's and 1950's Bernard DeVoto was sounding warnings in *Harper's* and *The Saturday Evening Post*. "Shall We Let Them Ruin Our National Parks?" In 1961 Professor John Ise prefaced his scholarly, factual *Our National Park Policy* with statements of personal dismay about impossible parking at Old Faithful, lines of sputtering cars in Zion Canyon, and the Yosemite Valley that was "almost an overcrowded slum." Ise said that "our population explosion and the ubiquitous automobile . . . are turning our fair land into a madhouse."

In 1966 articles in *Forbes Magazine*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and other periodicals were pointing up the automobile and attendant phenomena that made Yosemite Valley an issue of continental significance. The *Wall Street Journal* gave featured space to

AH, WILDERNESS
SEVERE OVERCROWDING
BRINGS ILLS OF THE CITY
TO SCENIC YOSEMITE

PARK'S RANGERS FIGHT CRIME,
TRAFFIC JAMS, SMOG; BEARS
BECOME SURLY GOURMANDS
OTHER PARKS THREATENED, TOO

One park official was quoted as saying, "It's automobiles, not people, that are crowding the parks." Another said, "The valley is too fragile for the treatment it's been getting. Within a few years we'll have to outlaw both camping and automobiles here." The assistant postmaster said, "The whole damn valley will be black-topped soon."

From 1913 to 1966—in little more than half a century the automobile had proved its power. No one now needed to prophesy about it, for it had five decades of history to flaunt. It had brought more downgrading changes to Yosemite Valley than the previous five thousand years of erosion. Each day it was cramming a medium-sized city into a valley meant for a hamlet.

Responsible people are faced again with big questions. What is progress, if there is such a thing? Where do automobile values stop and other values begin? Can we longer endure having the NPS become the National Parking System? When and where does the government say "No" to the car? How much vested—and invested—interest does a concessionaire have? What about democracy and the alleged right to unlimited access? When is a tourist attraction "full"? What can be learned from the Alpine Europeans about inconspicuous scenic electric trains and aerial tramways? Why not immediately take steps to disassociate national parks from the playground idea? Does the present federal campaign to keep Americans in America and seeing their own country mean travel only to see other travelers traveling or creeping in low gear to campgrounds and tarpaulin resorts already crammed tight?

What can the authorities do to apply the National Park Act of 1916 to Yosemite Valley, once again setting a precedent for other parks? Put the cars back on the rim, outside the park? Bring in the army again, to the constructive peacetime task of enforcing rules that civilians and their officials endlessly ignore, violate, or alter? Dismantle the "improvements" and give nature several centuries to recover? Charge high entrance fees? Require all visitors to write ahead for reservations, as California does for trips through Hearst's Castle at San Simeon, a state park? Go back to one-way roads and stagecoaches, regaining charm and adventure as in the careful historical reconstructions at Sturbridge, Massachusetts, and Williamsburg, Virginia?

The ironies in the victory of the autoists of 1913 are now clear to some of the millions of today's automobile owners. The words of Forester Schwarz and Ambassador Bryce are still with us. "My experience has been that automobiles, notwithstanding their many practical advantages, soon change the character of a locality." . . . "If you were to realize what the result of the automobile will be in that wonderful, that incomparable valley, you will keep it out." □

The National Archives contain the entire file of correspondence concerning the admission of automobile traffic to Yosemite Valley from 1907 to 1915—approximately four-hundred-fifty pages of letters, telegrams, reports, memoranda, and maps. Here are basic documents like Major Benson's typewritten rules of 1906 and Secretary Lane's memorandum of 1913; and here are scores of personal letters, some in difficult penmanship, some badly typed, and many expressed in highly individual styles. I selected representative passages from these letters as I shaped up the conflict.

The second most important source is *Proceedings of the National Parks Conference Held at Yosemite National Park on October 14, 15, and 16, 1912.* Since the conference is reported verbatim, Secretary Fisher, Senator Curtin, and others speak in their own rich personal idiom. Almost as useful are the remarks of Ambassador Bryce in the American Civic Association's *National Parks*, Pamphlet Series II, No. 6 (December, 1912), and the statements by William Colby and Frederic Schwarz in their letters, which Dr. Holway R. Jones of the University of Oregon Library found for me in the files of the Sierra Club.

Supplementary to all these, and the starting point of my research, are the works of J. Allen Davis, writer, historian, and former general counsel of the extraordinary and highly literate Automobile Club of Southern California. His many-volumed series "Automobile Club of Southern California Historical Material: Digest of Minutes of Board of Directors and *Touring Topics*" enlightened me and sent me off on various research sorties such as the one that led to the original documents in the minutes of the board of directors.

In corroborating and amplifying details from my central sources, I studied official reports; standard works on Yosemite and national parks, like those by Paul H. Buck and Carl Russell; and the national parks issue of *American Forests* (August, 1929). In libraries from Boston and Hartford to Los Angeles I found booklets or volumes I hadn't come upon elsewhere, such as Charlotte M. Brown's *California Literary Miscellany and Yosemite Valley Collection of Articles from Century Magazine, 1881-1899, Compiled and Indexed*, in the Doheny Library at the University of Southern California. To clear up details, I wrote dozens of letters to old timers, park and automobile association officials, and historians.

A specialist in American literature and American studies at California State College at Los Angeles, **Richard G. Lillard** *has for many years displayed a continuing concern for the qualities of the American landscape—a concern most recently revealed in* Eden in Jeopardy *(1966), a hard-nosed look at the evolution of Los Angeles.*

Solidarity Forever *continued from page 27*

the game by being around when things were happening. And because we learned it the hard way, those of us still alive are more than ever convinced that nothing less than the solidarity of freeborn, God-guided men can make the "final conflict" anything other than Armageddon. If this be chauvinism, then let the cockeyed world make the most of it! □

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Belated Frontier *continued from page 10*

century, and modern technology has robbed it of many uncertainties. Several factors have been responsible for its peaceful evolution, among the most important being: the agricultural experiment stations at Beaverlodge and Fort Vermilion, which developed profitable methods of farming there; quick-maturing spring wheats able to take advantage of the short growing season; introduction of the crawler-type tractor and the clearing blade shortly after World War I; development of rust-resistant strains of wheat by the Canadian National Research Council in 1933; and the availability of deep well-drilling rigs, highways, and truck transportation.

In most ways the Peace has experienced an orderly conquest, devoid of most of the bizarre hardships and incidents of other frontier areas that have provided colorful grist for the fictioneer and television producer. Today it is hard to recognize the Peace as a frontier. This is not to imply there were no hardships or problems in settling the Peace River frontier — there were. Any Peace River man who remembers going into the country over the Edson or Lesser Slave Lake Trails about 1910–15 can expound in detail the horrors of trying to hack a trace through the bush, while dragging the wagons through hub-deep muskeg, with his livestock and family nearly crazed by clouds of mosquitoes. Once he was in and settled there were still problems. Because of the very deep water table and the poor water-bearing qualities of the lacustrine clays that underlie Peace River uplands, drinking water for home and livestock was difficult to get in many places. Sometimes water had to be hauled scores of miles or be collected in shallow stock ponds.

In the 1930's a wave of "second righters" — wheat farmers blown out of Manitoba and Saskatchewan by wide-spread drought conditions — swept into Peace River country. Hundreds of square miles of wilderness land in the Peace River district were made available for second rights preemption, permitting farmers from drought-stricken areas to reestablish themselves by canceling their original holdings and preempting new quarter-sections. Many of them trekked over two thousand miles by horse and wagon with all their belongings — a toilsome journey of three to four months. The unsurfaced roads of the district were quagmires during spring and early summer rains, and families had to cut woodpiles higher than their cabins to last through the cold winters; yet most of these "second righters" gained a foothold, stuck it out, and became stable pillars of their communities. The provincial government provided loans and guided the newcomers to areas that were most likely to provide a livelihood.

Lord Tweedsmuir of Elsfield, the Governor General of Canada from 1935 to 1940, best known to Americans as John Buchan, author of *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, delivered a typically British-colonial, stiff-upper-lip, thin-red-line-of-Empire appraisal of the Canadian pioneer in his work, *Memory-Hold-the-Door:* "At his best, I think, I have found him as a new-comer in Canada, where he is pushing north into districts like the Peace River, pioneering in the old sense. . . . He is one of the few aristocrats left in the world. He has the right sense of the values of life, because his cosmos embraces both nature and man. I think he is the most steadfast human being now alive. . . ." Most Peace River pioneers would be embarrassed by such lavish praise.

Such literature as has been written about the Peace

River country has nothing to say about gunplay, fence cutting, cattle stampedes, wild mining camps, or water rights disputes. Indians were pushed back by treaty to the margins of agricultural land before the first waves of settlers arrived in 1911. The nearest thing to a folk hero produced in the Peace was Twelve-Foot Davis, who lies buried on a hill overlooking the town of Peace River. His epitaph reads: H. F. DAVIS — BORN IN VERMONT — 1820—DIED AT SLAVE LAKE—1893. PATHFINDER, PIONEER, MINER, AND TRADER. HE WAS EVERY MAN'S FRIEND AND NEVER LOCKED HIS CABIN DOOR. Standing at this grave, one can look up the great Peace River past the haze-smoked, wooded islands to the junction with the Smoky, where Alexander Mackenzie camped in 1792

The Peace River country was settled under a homestead lease and sale system similar in many respects to the homestead laws of the United States. The rectangular coordinate system of land survey is patterned after that of the United States. The 160-acre quarter section is the standard homestead unit, with provision for ownership of up to three contiguous quarter sections under some conditions. Before lands are opened for settlement they are subjected to cadastral surveys, and rigorous soil and timber surveys. Land that is not suitable for agricultural use is not opened for settlement. Even clearing costs are carefully estimated before land is thrown open. At every stage the new settler is shepherded carefully past pitfalls which earlier farmers encountered.

A measure of the changing nature of this new type of frontier is afforded by the Mennonites. They first sought isolation in this region; now they are leaving to seek new lands because the Peace River district has become "too worldly — too civilized." Modern transportation facilities reach most parts of the region; the blessings of electricity and the mail order catalog are ubiquitous. Mechanized agriculture predominates, and the ministrations of a solicitous government ease many burdens of "pioneering" in the old sense.

From 1953 through 1957 the Canadian Department of Agriculture made a farm business study in the Fort Vermilion area, at the extreme north of Peace River country. Data were gathered from a random sample of thirty farms. This study showed that about half of these farms were two quarter sections in size. The three dominant cash crops were wheat, flax, and legume seed — usually alfalfa. Oats and barley used for stock feed, as well as green feed and hay, also took appreciable acreage.

Conquering the wilderness with modern tools: clearing blade near Fort Vermilion.

While the number of livestock is not large, it is growing This indicates a definite trend away from dependence upon large cash-crop acreage to a more balanced, mixed farm economy. The largest single income item is still wheat, however livestock sales now account for almost one-third of total farm income here. The fact that these farms owned an average of $7500 worth of farm machinery belies any characterization of this as a primitive farming economy.

The Northern Alberta Railroad has been completed from Grimshaw north to Pine Point on Great Slave Lake. Long freight trains thunder southward now with lead and zinc ore for smelters farther south, and the Peace River district is bisected by rail and road facilities from north to south and east to west. Even the Peace's outer fringe is falling under the influence of modern technology. Near Fort Vermilion, where land is now being cleared, the methods are new and, in some cases, revolutionary. One might say that the real frontiersman today is the inventor who improves the grain combine, the visionary politician who opens new land to orderly

settlement, the plant breeder who develops a hardier or quicker-maturing grain. The successful campaign against wheat rust conducted by the National Research Council of Canada in the early 1930's stands out as a great pioneering effort, worthy to stand beside any first-righters' struggle anywhere on the high plains.

During the two months when the ferry at Fort Vermilion is not running because of the fall freeze-up and spring thaw, 25,000 pounds of dressed beef and pork, 2,000 pounds of dressed poultry, and 4,680 dozen eggs are flown out to market. In the town of Peace River several winters ago, I met an alfalfa seed grower who had flown his own plane down two-hundred miles from the north to attend a noon luncheon meeting of a service club

A technology that gives a farmer wings, introduces disease resistance to his crops, provides him with equipment to plow and plant and fertilize and combine faster and more efficiently, can remove most of the hazards of the world's pioneer fringe. The old embellished stereotype of pioneering ceases to exist. It has never existed in the Peace River country, for this fertile land had the overwhelming advantage of being a belated frontier. □

In the preparation of this article, the author has relied heavily upon extensive notes made during several visits to the Peace River country, in both winter and summer. These notes are fortified by bulletins from Canadian and provincial government bureaus, material from the agricultural experiment stations at Beaverlodge and Fort Vermilion, and discussions with provincial officials in Edmonton and members of the Department of Geography at the University of Alberta. The classical source on new settlement areas, worldwide, is Isaiah Bowman, *The Pioneer Fringe* (New York, 1931). Historical information on Alexander Mackenzie is from his own *Voyages from Montreal on the River St Laurence, Through the Continent of North America, to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans; in the Years 1789 and 1793* (London, 1801). A delightful source of historical, economic, and geographic information about the Peace River country is James G. MacGregor, *The Land of Twelve-Foot Davis* (Edmonton, 1952). Among periodical articles on Peace River settlement, these three were particularly useful: W. D. Albright, "Past, Present and Future of the Peace" *Canadian Geographical Journal*, XVI (1938), 127-137; J. Lewis Robinson, "The Northern Extension of the Pioneer Fringe of Agriculture on the Great Plains of Canada" *Proceedings, Seventh International Congress of the International Geographical Union* (Washington, 1952); Frank H. Ellis, "Peace River's Second-Righters," *Canadian Geographical Journal*, LIII (1956), 94-101.

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The Austramerican West *continued from page 37*

which permitted the re-use of extremely expensive water, kept his company's operations profitable until the richest field in Australia, the "Golden Mile" of Boulder-Kalgoorlie, opened new areas for exploitation.

The Boulder-Kalgoorlie vein of gold extended in a ragged line northwest into the heartbreak country of the western desert. Hoover followed it until, at its terminus, he came upon a promising dig called "The Sons of Gwalia" by its Welsh prospectors. On Hoover's advice his employers purchased it, and he was appointed the mine's manager at a salary of $10,000 a year—with no place to spend it. Water was as valuable as gold; Hoover confessed in his *Memoirs* that he grew two cabbages at a cost of $250 apiece. Camels were brought in as the most reliable means of transportation, just as they were in the driest parts of the American West.

"I built a corrugated iron residence under the shadow of Mt. Leonora, one of the highest peaks in Western Australia," Hoover wrote later. "It rose 160 feet above the plain." A few months ago I photographed that house from the dizzy heights of Mt. Leonora through a telescopic lens, as scavengers were taking the last of the rusted machinery out of the abandoned Gwalia mine.

Hoover left Australia in 1899, but his mine went on to produce fifty-five million dollars before all the mines in the billion-dollar line petered out. The other mines are closed now, and their towns are dead, with only a "White House Hotel" or "Denver Hotel" left to recall the days of greatness and to sell memory-eroding liquor to the few white inhabitants too apathetic to waltz their matildas to greener pastures. As civilization moves out, nature moves back in, as it has done with the Colorado mines. I saw one aborigine chase another with a spear one block from the center of Kalgoorlie, still Western Australia's second city; and in Leonora grass grows in Hoover Street.

In more golden times, Hoover's innovations were anticipated by equally enterprising Americans. The Wells Fargo idea of bringing fast, relatively comfortable, and comparatively safe transportation to the diggings was imported to Australia by another American, Freeman Cobb. Until he introduced two Concord coaches from the United States, transportation in Australia was a matter of crude, bulky two-wheeled carts pulled by bullocks.

With the financial help of still another American immigrant, George Francis Train (who was offered the presidency of the intended new republic if the Eureka rebellion had succeeded), Cobb established the firm of Cobb and Co. (always pronounced "Cobb and Coe"), which became fabulously profitable and figured even more prominently in the folklore and folk song of Australia than Wells Fargo did in America.

Except for the Cobb and Co. songs and a handful of insignificant anomalies, the Australian gold rush resembled the American gold rush in producing no true folk songs. The reason for this strange lack of folk expression in both countries was the appearance in each of an exceptionally gifted music hall singer and songwriter who immediately seized the mind and the mood of the miners and ground out excellent songs as fast as they were needed. In California he was John A. Stone ("Old Put"); in Australia he was Charles Thatcher. Both gathered their compositions into songbooks that eventually reached the hands and voices of every miner.

Even more important in the field of Australian entertainment was James Cassius Williamson, an American who had emigrated to the Australian goldfields with only one possession—a play called *Struck Oil*, which he had bought from a California miner-playwright. It was a tremendous success, occupying the Australian stage for half a century and elevating Williamson from playing the part of a bloodhound in an Australian production of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to the progenitor of the theatrical family that today controls absolutely all stage entertainment in Australia.

While Williamson played the stage, the Australian version of the American outlaw was "bailing up" the Cobb and Co. coaches. Called "bushrangers" (which, ironically enough, was originally an American word-coinage), these highwaymen plagued the Australian outback from the colony's inception until the execution of the most notorious of their breed, Ned Kelly, in 1880. The bushrangers were at least as colorful and dramatic as the American badmen. They have yet to receive their apotheosis on Australian television, but it will come. There was, for example, the great aboriginal bushranger, Mosquito, whose last words when the hangman fastened the rope around his neck were, "Hanging no bloody good for blackfellow."

"Why not as good for blackfellow as for whitefellow?" asked the hangman.

"Very good for whitefellow," replied Mosquito. "He used to it."

And there was Ben Hall, the best of the bushrangers, a ballad about whom I collected from an old woman who had been delivered in childbirth by Ben Hall's sister. Ben Hall's bushranging companion, Johnny Gilbert, boasted a sister with an illustrious career of her own, first as an Irish Lady (wife of a baronet), then as a nun, and finally as a Mother Superior, in which position she died at the age of ninety-seven. And Johnny O'Meally, the Australian Billy the Kid. And Frank Gardiner, who was deported to America after serving ten years of a thirty-two-year sentence, opened the "Twilight" saloon in San Francisco, and got himself shot to death in a Colorado poker game in 1903. And the greatest of them all, Ned Kelly, whose gang captured whole towns, and who faced troopers' bullets encased in a heavy suit of armor which, reversing the biblical admonition, he hammered out of plowshares.

Even without the American precedent, one would expect successful badmen to be worshipped as national heroes in a country whose first settlers were themselves in that line of work, who had no great generals to place on heroic pedestals, among whom sheep and cattle rustling was a "universal and irresistible" custom, and who counted it a patriotic duty to hate the police. It was only to be expected that when Australia adopted decimal currency in 1966, its ten-dollar bill carried the portrait of Francis Greenway, who had been transported for forgery. And it was only to be expected that the first substantial counterfeiting of the new currency was in ten-dollar bills.

In opening both Wests, the conquest of the physical environment meant also the conquest of the aboriginal inhabitants, who had adapted themselves so well to the environment that they were almost a part of it. Australia's native peoples were considerably further back on the path of cultural evolution than America's Indians, not because of any necessary inferiority of intelligence, but because of a hard fact of biological evolution first enunciated by Alfred Russel Wallace, the naturalist who independently and simultaneously struck upon the theory of natural selection with Darwin. What Wallace discovered was that all biota southeast of an imaginary geographical line that now bears his name are extremely primitive. No animals evolved into true mammals; therefore none were domesticable by methods available in the nineteenth century. No plants evolved to the stage where they were capable of productive cultivation; therefore

no farming was possible with native plants.

The first convict settlers and the first inland explorers ran hard against this evolutionary fact without understanding it; and it destroyed many of them, as Alan Moorehead has demonstrated in his unforgettable narrative of the tragic expedition of Burke and Wills into "the ghastly blank" of central Australia. The aborigines—and the white settlers, too, without their introduced plants and animals—were condemned by nature to an Old Stone Age level of existence. It may be a thrill to thresh the Australian grass tree *(Xanthorrhoea)* into acaroid resin in the aboriginal fashion as I was privileged to do in the far southwest of Western Australia, and to know that you are handling a living plant that elsewhere in the world disappeared at the time of the great dinosaurs; but when survival depends on the harvest of edible plants, threshing wheat is more to the point.

It was difficult enough for the early colonists, with all their imported sheep and seeds and expertise, to make the land produce enough food to keep them alive, without having to put up with the nuisance of naked aborigines who burned off fields to catch hiding lizards and who could not be made to understand that any man could *own* a sheep, much less several thousand of them. Until established agriculture gave the settlers that security on which all tolerance of minority peoples depends, they saw no reason to revise the estimate of the aborigines made by the first Englishman to lay reluctant eyes upon them, the seventeenth-century pirate-explorer, William Dampier. Dampier's description of the natives was so memorably unfavorable that Jonathan Swift created the Yahoos of *Gulliver's Travels* out of it.

There is no time to chronicle the reduction of the Australian natives beyond saying that they put up less resistance than the American Indians and came out of the experience with a much better chance of integrating into the white population than America's inconvenient minorities. There were an estimated three-hundred-thousand of them on the continent when the First Fleet dropped anchor in Port Jackson; today there are about twenty-thousand fullbloods. Political agitators, finding such statistics useful in bringing about cardiac phlebotomies in good-hearted people who never wander out of their atmosphere of comfortable ignorance, automatically infer that the natives were "killed off." But the mundane fact of the disappearance of the Australian natives is that most of them simply vanished into the general population. Two generations of intermarriage, and aboriginal girls win white beauty contests.

The few hundred natives who hold absolutely to the old ways are the only permanent inhabitants of the remotest parts of the Australian West—the desert areas comprising the eastern half of Western Australia, the northern half of South Australia, and the southern half of the Northern Territory. The only white settlement in this enormous wasteland, other than a handful of mission and government stations (none of which has more than a dozen white residents), is the improbable town of Alice Springs, an artificial oasis reliably accessible only by air. How quickly the population falls off where agriculture is impossible is shown by the census figures of South Australia. Although South Australia as a whole is one of the richest parts of the continent, its northern half supports only one thousandth of one percent of the total population.

Like the United States of a hundred years ago, only the seaboard of Australia has a genuine white population. Along the edges of this amorphous line one finds the aborigines whom their own intent or circumstances have not brought into the general populace. Most of these are partbloods, as opposed to the nearly undiluted fullbloods of the desert. Among these people one finds situations of preposterous syncretism, just as among our Indians. I worked with such a family in Mullewa, Western Australia, recording the songs of the mother, a fullblood Wadjeri, one of the ferocious desert tribes of whom the coastal aborigines were terrified. As the old girl wailed her eerie chants into my microphone, her daughter, also a fullblood but the mother of six partblood children, sidled over and remarked *sotto voce* and without a trace of facial expression, "Top forty." Later I recorded her little boy singing a "hard country" Australian song: *Potatoes they grow small in Queensland,/Potatoes they grow small in Queensland,/Potatoes they grow small/And they dig 'em in the fall,/And they eat 'em tops and all/In Queensland.*

"Potatoes they grow small in Kansas"? Certainly. But that's the way it is with the Austramerican West. The circumstances, the organism, and the environment produce similar responses. If one culture has already created a perfect expression, whether song or action, the other adopts it freely.

Most of the Australian West is hard country, a sort of demonically expanded Arkansas, into which city-bound Australians had to be driven with the club and the carrot, just as in the United States. In both countries

independent and long-simmering agitation produced legislation for creating the carrot—land for small farmers and pastoralists at nominal cost. And the carrot was made about the same time in the two Wests.

The American Homestead Act was passed in 1862. In Australia, which was then a disunified collection of sovereign colonies, similar acts were passed separately: in New South Wales, the Alienation and Occupation Acts in 1861; in Victoria, the Duffy Act in 1862; in Queensland, the Selection Act in 1868; and in South Australia, the Strangeways Act in 1869. All these acts, American and Australian, were much of a muchness and nothing of a nothingness: enough land for a prolific family to make a living on if a living could be made on it. The main difference was that the American peasant was called a homesteader and the Australian was called a free selector. Both suffered the same disasters of environment, climate, and luck, and both generally failed. (In Australia only about 15 percent of the free selectors were able to hold their land and make even a subsistence living). Both were philosophical fatalists who bore their misfortune with wryly humorous views of themselves. The farmer to whom the Arkansas Traveler played the last part of that fiddle tune could have been Dad Rudd of the Australian classic, *On Our Selection*, and his gawking son could have been Dad's hapless Dave.

In surveying an archaeological site on the featureless Nullarbor Plain of southwestern South Australia, I came upon a real life "Dad and Dave." Dad had about ten thousand dollars' worth of wool baled for shipment to Adelaide, but living on the Nullarbor had so deeply ingrained a pattern of poverty in him that his woolshed might just as well have been empty. His house was built of railroad ties, hauled God knows how from the transcontinental railroad a hundred miles to the north across waterless and trackless country. Dave was busy with a pair of tin snips, making roof patches out of a pile of empty five-gallon gasoline cans salvaged from a truck wreck a hundred and ninety miles down the track to the east. Dad wore an old army jacket with two buttons remaining at the top and a pair of baggy trousers frayed to threads at the bottoms because they were four inches over the soles of his shoes. Only his ears, apparently designed for that purpose, kept his hat from slipping down over his eyes; and his mouthful of no teeth wizened both his face and his outlook. An aborigine, wearing some of Dad's discarded clothes, knelt in the paddock gutting a wombat. Tied by its long neck to a fence, an emu looking like a very old and dirty floor mop, watched the proceedings as if there were something to eat in them somewhere. I half expected Dad to turn to Dave and order him to "get that kangaroo out of the well—I mean *all* of him!"

That night, as my companion anthropologist and I lay in the bush several dozen miles from Dad's selection, basking in the fragrant warmth of a sandalwood campfire built by our aborigine, Dad and Dave and several other equally lank and gawky sons came bouncing through the night over the saltbush and through the mulga in a one-eyed flivver of indeterminate origin with three kangaroos strapped to its bonnet. The gangly sons unwound themselves, threw the 'roos to the aborigine (who promptly set to work eviscerating them, a process that overcame the aroma of the sandalwood) and took us back to the American homesteading days of a hundred years ago. One of the boys even knew "The Old Bark Hut," the Australian equivalent of our "Little Old Sod Shanty on the Plain": *In the winter time—preserve us all!—to live in there's a treat,/Especially when it's raining hard, and blowing wind and sleet./The rain comes down the chimney, and your meat is black with soot—/That's a substitute for pepper in the old bark hut.*

But their prose conversation drew us again to the Australian pastoral back blocks, for Australian outback idiom bears no resemblance to any other form of English on earth. One could identify it as English only by the certainty that it was nothing else:

> This Bourke shower blows up, see, and Blue's out past Woop Woop on a cold-jawed alligator sweating on the tailers of his coaches. He reckons when he finds the mulga scrubbers they'll be wind splitters. It's tucker time and the babbler's ready if he hasn't mucked around. 'Strike me, Blue'd sooner hump a drum or yabber with an ear-bashing wop wop, but you've got to have a go. 'Strewth, he's ropable when he blows in. And then he finds the slushy's shickered and it's tin stuff again. He can't keep his shirt on and he goes real crooked on that water burner. He does his Charlie, my flaming colonial, he does! I'm giving you the good oil. Too right!

If I had wanted to break into that instructive monologue, obviously drawn from a stockman (cowboy) experience, I could have had the Nullarbor versions of the great treasury of cattle songs that somehow bring the Australian West closer to the American than any recital of cowboy-stockman ethnography. All the boys around the campfire, for instance, knew "The Dying Stockman"—*Wrap me up in my stockwhip and blanket/And bury*

me deep down below,/Where the dingoes and crows can't molest me/In the shade where the coolibahs grow. But none of them knew, any more than an American cowboy would have known, that "The Dying Stockman" is a colonial relative of "The Unfortunate Rake," that eighteenth-century Irish street ballad about a soldier succumbing melodiously to a social disease. The song came to America with the Irish migrants and metamorphosed successively in the different American folk cultures into "The Bad Girl's Lament" (Appalachian Mountains), "St. James' Infirmary" (Southern Negro), and "Streets of Laredo" (cowboy). The genealogical line of "The Dying Stockman" is not pure (who would expect strict legitimacy from a wastrel perishing from such an affliction?), for also in the eighteenth-century background is a British sea ballad, "The Tarpaulin Jacket." The Australian song cleaves closest to "The Streets of Laredo" and similar expressions of the Dying Cowboy–Dying Stockman syndrome, because there is something in the cattle profession that turns its practitioners into a mob of sentimental Dickensian idiots, no matter what side of the globe they occupy.

Not a word of any of this to Dave and his brothers, of course. Our rapport as Americans and Australians was not to be made by communicating to them the information that those big cockroaches in their woolshed were members of the species *Blattus americanus*. I knew a better way to reach them. I dug my guitar out of the Land Cruiser and sang "The Pub with No Beer" and a few compositions by those great Australian cowboy singers Smoky Dawson and Tex Morton, and the two Wests met in true harmony under the unifying Big Sky that could have been looming over Wyoming as well as the Nullarbor Plain—except that Orion was upside down. □

Any list of recommended reading on Australia must begin with the greatest Australian book, *Such Is Life*, by Tom Collins (Joseph Furphy), published first in Sydney in 1903 by the Bulletin Newspaper Company. It is a rambling, episodic, thoroughly wonderful narrative about a mob of bullockies trying to get their wagons and their bullocks across a hostile outback when the Australian West was far from being conquered. It is a book that can be endlessly read out of, as well as read. The only trouble is that it is incomprehensible to anyone who cannot read with ease Dave's soliloquy in this article—and even then the allusions in *Such Is Life* are elusive. The title, for instance, is a quotation—the last words of Ned Kelly before they hanged him.

Anyone who cannot read Dave's soliloquy, by the way, might be able to make sense out of it with the help of my article "Australian Cattle Lingo" *(American Speech*, October, 1958).

Marjorie Barnard's *A History of Australia* (Sydney, 1962) is the most satisfying single-volume history of Australia, though Manning Clark's *A Short History of Australia* (New York, 1963) will recommend itself to purchasers as a paperback substitute. Clark's liberal bias should be kept in mind, just as one reads Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., with caution. A more highly recommended paperback is Donald Horne's *The Lucky Country* (New York, 1964)—a clear, reasoned, unbiased, and unprejudiced view of Australia as it stands in this decade.

Useful and fascinating collections of primary materials in Australian history are Geoffrey Ingleton's *True Patriots All* (Sydney, 1952), a facsimile assemblage of broadsides, and Irma and Cyril Pearl's *Our Yesterdays*, an unparalleled history of Australia in photographs. With different captions, many of these pictures could be set in America's West.

For further reading on the Australian gold rush, Jay Monaghan's *Australians and the Gold Rush* (Berkeley, 1966) is acceptable introductory reading, and its bibliographic references will lead the serious investigator into even better books.

Life in the early days of the Australian colony is well delineated by "An Emigrant Mechanic" who may or may not be one "Alexander Harris"; the title of his book is *Settlers and Convicts, or Recollections of Sixteen Years' Labor in the Australian Backwoods*, first published in London in 1847, but accessible now in the Melbourne University Press edition of 1953.

My *Bibliography of the Australian Aborigines* (Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1963) contains more than ten thousand titles of works on these natives, but for readers unwilling to consult this source, *The World of the First Australians*, by Ronald M. and Catherine H. Berndt (Chicago, 1964), is the best single treatise of the aborigines.

"Dad and Dave" are to be found in two short novels by Steele Rudd (Arthur Hoey Davis): *On Our Selection* and *Our New Selection* (Bulletin Newspaper Company, Sydney, 1899 and 1903).

Australian folk songs have yet to be gathered into a representative collection, much less a comprehensive one. Efforts toward this end are *Australian Bush Ballads*, edited by Douglas Stewart and Nancy Keesing (Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1955), and *Old Bush Songs*, enlarged and revised by the same editors from the collection of A. B. Paterson (Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1957). For Thatcher's compositions, Hugh Anderson's *Goldrush Songster* (Rams Skull Press, Ferntree Gully, Melbourne, n.d.) is a good selection. My own record, *Australian Folksongs and Ballads* (Folkways Records FW 8718, New York, 1959), is the best collection on phonograph records of Australian songs, if I do say so myself. A fine history of Australia based on the folk songs of its proletariat is Russel Ward's *The Australian Legend* (Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1958).

For bushrangers, G. E. Boxall's *The Story of the Australian Bushrangers* (London, 1899) will guide the wary reader away from a spate of more modern but unreliable histories.

Alan Moorehead's narrative of the tragic Burke-Wills expedition, mentioned in this article, is *Cooper's Creek* (Harper and Row, New York, 1963).

***Anthropology, folklore, and history are but a few of the many interests held by* John Greenway.** *He is editor of the* Journal of American Folklore *and author of "Woody Guthrie: The Man, the Land, the Understanding," an article that appeared in the Fall, 1966, issue of* The American West *and has since been anthologized in* The American Folk Scene: Dimensions of the Folksong Revival, *edited by David A. DeTurk and A. Poulin, Jr. (1967).*

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Commuting on the Grand Canal: Venice, California, ca. 1910. Venice, seaside resort town and speculator's subdivision, was one end-product of the evolution of land-use in the West, from homesteader sections and sod huts to quarter-acre lots and little boxes. In a forthcoming article in The American West, *Helen Hosmer will cast a fond and sardonic glance back at the delights — and a few of the irritations — of this garish celebration thrown up on the sands of Southern California.*

(Photo courtesy of the Los Angeles County Museum.)